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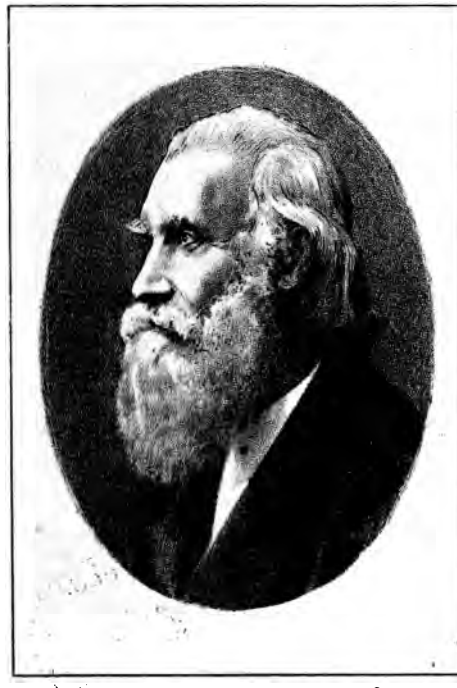
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INFANT BAPTISM
DEMONSTRATED TO BE SCRIPTURAL

MALCOLM.


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Yours truly

I Malcolm

INFANT BAPTISM

DEMONSTRATED TO BE

REASONABLE, HISTORICAL,

AND

SCRIPTURAL.

BY

JAMES MALCOLM,

MISSIONARY.

AUTHOR OF "THE CROSS AND THE CROWN," ETC.

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settled, and of hastily adopting that which is presented to them with no little plausibility and much imposing confidence."

So says Dr. Wardlaw; and, appropriating his language, with him we say, that "we invite the attention of our young Christian friends, not fearing that if we are only enabled to come to the subject without the heat of party opinionativeness, in a cool, composed, and reasonable frame of mind, and especially in humble dependence on Divine teaching, we shall be led into the truth, and established in the due observance of this Scriptural institution."

"One ground of objection we must anticipate, and endeavour to remove; because it is frequently and confidently urged against all *inferential* conclusions, and all reasonings on the subject.

It is alleged that the case is one which does not admit of a process of reasoning,—one with which argument and inference have nothing to do. The ordinance of Baptism, both in itself and in regard to the subjects of it, is a *positive institute*, and a positive institute, it is said, cannot be established by reasoning, but

requires, to warrant its observance, *explicit terms of institution.*

In reply to this view of the matter, let it be considered, in the first place, that if anything can be made out from the word of God as having Divine authority to support it, it is surely our duty to obey, whatever may have been the mode of arriving at the conclusion.

Only make the supposition that we can shew such authority for any practice, then we certainly can never consider ourselves as at liberty to decline compliance, because the point has not been made out exactly in the way which we had previously determined to be the only legitimate and right way. The simple and only question is,—*What saith the Scriptures?* It is not—*In what way do the Scriptures say it?* It is not ours in this or in anything else to prescribe to God.

We hope to be able immediately to shew that the requisition on the part of our Baptist brethren of a *positive precept* for our practice is unfair, and that we are rather entitled to require such explicit authority from *them.*

If we can succeed in establishing the previous existence of the connexion of children with their parents, under the same covenant promise with that which constitutes the ground of fellowship in the Christian Church, then we have a title to demand an *explicit statute of repeal.*

Explicit authority for *relinquishing* a practice is quite as indispensable as explicit authority for *commencing* one. But more of this by and by.

I must still further premise (because on all controverted topics I feel the essential benefit of clearing my ground as to the principles of reasoning) that the question *is not at all about adult baptism*, or about the necessity to the baptism of adults, of a profession of the faith. On this, Baptists and Pedobaptists are of one mind.

When, therefore, the former adduce in opposition to infant baptism those passages of the New Testament, in which the subject is the baptism of adults, and from them insist on the universal necessity of understanding and faith, to baptism, they do nothing at all to the purpose.

They are guilty of a sophism. They bring infants into their conclusion, whilst they are not in the premises. The illusion is very much of the same kind with one which abounds in the writings of Unitarians, who have an inveterate habit of adducing passages to prove that Christ is not God, which only prove that he is man. As if to prove his humanity (the point in which we agree with them, and which we are quite as desirous to establish as themselves), were to disprove his divinity (the point in which we differ from them, and which is not in the least degree affected by the evidence of his real humanity). Baptists seem to be chargeable with the same description of fallacy when they think to disprove infant baptism by proving adult baptism. Instead of establishing their own view of the subject on which we differ from them, they only establish, a thing quite unnecessary, a point on which we are perfectly agreed.

This observation narrows the limits of the field of argument, bringing the subject of dispute (which is always very desirable) into smaller compass.

"When denominations or individuals, possessing a

high degree of mental culture, go on from year to year differing about some important matter, notwithstanding discussions and explanations, it may be concluded as at least highly probable that both are reasoning from imperfect data—that there is some truth overlooked by both, which, if brought into view, would lead the parties, after due consideration, to see eye to eye. The baptist controversy supplies an example of what we refer to.

"The question—Should infants be baptised or not? has a much more important question underlying it. This question has, as a rule, been in times past overlooked by disputants. While discussing, from age to age, the question—Should infants be baptised? the question—What is the legal relation of infants as infants to heaven and to Christ? has been strangely overlooked. If looked at at all, it has only got side glances, which could determine nothing. It has not been looked at broadly and directly. No one almost has thought of asking whether, as to their legal relationship, infants belonged to the devil's kingdom or to the kingdom of Christ?

"A question more thrillingly interesting it would be difficult to conceive, and yet even parents have, with rare exceptions, utterly ignored the question. They have had the idea that infants were born with a depraved nature, but that, notwithstanding that depravity, those who die in infancy are somehow saved. That dying could of itself alter either their legal or their moral state has not, so far as we know, been affirmed; but it has been taken for granted that somehow infants who die in infancy are saved. But when of two infants born on the same day, one dies and the other lives, the question is, Is the *one that lives* in the *meantime* in a safe state? But once the great truth is received, that in every age, in reference to heaven, infants have, by divine appointment, held the same legal relation as adult believers, and that as to their moral or spiritual state they need as yet no conversion, because they have not morally travelled in any direction; that what they require is to be started aright by [bringing them to Jesus—ED.] and having God's testimonies, &c., taught them as early as they can learn. [Viewing them in that light—ED.]

there will not long be hesitancy in any mind regarding the fitness of recognising their legal relation to Christ and to heaven by baptizing them."

NOTE.—In the latter part of my book I have had occasion to reproduce some of my arguments, in reply to objections which came up in various forms. I have done so because I thought them more suitable and convincing than any others which, for the sake of variety, I might have brought forward; repetition, therefore, of a suitable argument may be expected.

ERRATA.

On page 1, first line, read "two" instead of "three."

On page 6, line 20, read "frame" instead of "frames."

On page 49, after the word "Glasgow," in second line from bottom, read "give the following references."

On page 63, line 9, for "recovering" read "discovering.'

INFANT BAPTISM.

OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED.

WE shall, first of all, answer the three principal objections urged against infant baptism; and by doing so may gain a more ready acceptance to the credible evidence thereafter set forth in behalf of the doctrine and practice of infant baptism.

Q.—What is one of the greatest objections urged by baptists against infant baptism?

A.—That there is not an explicit or express command or example in the New Testament. Therefore they say that infants ought not to be baptized.

Q.—If this principle were acted upon, would females be debarred from the Lord's Supper?

A.—Yes; for there is neither an express command nor an example in Scripture for female communion.

Q.—Do baptists admit females to communion without any express command or example?

A.—Yes, they do; while at the same time they

object to us for acting on the very same principle in our practice of infant baptism.

Q.—Do baptists, then, admit females to communion without any evidence from Scripture?

A.—No; they have evidence, but it is only inferential evidence.

Q.—Have baptists therefore a right to object to our introduction of inferential evidence for the establishing of infant baptism?

A.—No; they are entirely precluded from offering any such objection with reason or fairness.

On this point we shall quote from the Rev. Peter Edwards, for eleven years pastor of the Baptist Church in White's Row, Portsea, Hants. He renounced his connection with the baptists, having seen the errors of their doctrine on the subject of infant baptism.

He has written a book entitled "Candid Reasons for Renouncing the Principles of Ante-Pedobaptism." He writes as follows:—"All I am concerned to do in this place is to show that this argument of the baptists is false." The argument is this—"A person who has a right to a positive institute must be expressly mentioned as having that right; but infants are not so mentioned," &c. That the argument is false appears from these facts, viz.:—

1st.—The Scriptures do not countenance it; for as it is not proved by any part of the Word of God, being neither set down in the word nor yet in the sense of Holy Writ, and therefore a fiction invented by men to support a particular opinion, so it stands directly against God's Holy Word, and this is evident from hence, that women are expressly said to have been baptized, they are never said to have received the Lord's Supper.

The Scriptures, therefore, in plain opposition to this false argument, leave us to conclude their right to the Lord's Supper from their baptism, together with other grounds.

2nd.—The baptists themselves do not countenance it; for although they have written whole books on the strength of it, they are compelled to desert it, and to desert it the moment the subject is varied. For when they affirm that there is "no express law—no explicit warrant for infant baptism—infant baptism is nowhere mentioned in Scripture," let any one put it to them to prove the right of women to the Supper, and I will answer for it he will hear no more of express law on that head. He will find that all this hollow sound will die away, and each will shift for himself the best way he can, and fly for aid to analogy and inference.

"Women," say they, "may be gracious—women were baptized—women did eat of the paschal lamb—women are creatures of God, as well as men, and therefore"—Therefore what? Why, "therefore they should receive the Lord's Supper." What now is become of their express law? It is deserted, completely deserted; nor will they adopt it again till infant baptism is resumed.

Finally, as this argument militates against female communion as well as infant baptism, they must either both be wrong or the argument itself must be false. That the argument is false is sufficiently evident, as it not only has no support from Scripture, but lies directly against it; and from what I have observed in many recent conversations, I do not suppose there is a single baptist in the kingdom that will even dare to stick to it. For, after they had urged this argument upon me, I have turned the question from infant baptism to female communion, and I do not recollect one, either minister or private person, but has, in little more than a quarter of an hour, entirely given up the argument.

I have dwelt the longer on this argument, because, as it is very frequently urged, so it contains precisely one half of the baptist strength. This argument,

therefore, being destroyed, just half their strength is gone. And if any one be inclined to cry out, "There is no explicit example—there is no express law for infant baptism, &c.," any person has it in his power to quiet him almost in an instant, should he only ask him to produce his explicit law, &c., for female communion.

Having thus disposed of the *first half* of the baptist strength, we will next dispose of the second half, namely:—

"The Scriptures require faith and repentance universally as requisites to baptism; but as infants cannot have these, they are not proper subjects of baptism. Infants, say the baptists, cannot believe, cannot repent, and none should be baptized without them."

Q.—Is this the second of the two objections against infant baptism?

A. Yes; and a very thoughtless objection it is, fo it strikes against circumcision, which was instituted by God Himself for infants eight days old. It was Abraham's faith that was required, not that of his infant seed; and when the apostles required repentance and faith in order to baptism, they also required faith in order to salvation; but they were only adults who

were thus addressed. Infants are not commanded, either by God or man, to repent or believe anything, they are only moral beings in embryo, not moral agents—not responsible because not capable, not able. Their baptism, therefore, cannot depend on their repentance and faith any more than their salvation depends on these conditions. When Jesus said, "Of such is the kingdom of God," He made reference to no conditions. These conditions, therefore, not belonging to children, do not prevent either their baptism or salvation.

The baptist minister who, we said, was between ten and eleven years in that connection before he saw his error, writes thus on this point:—"The most expeditious way of destroying this argument of the baptists would be this—They say the Scriptures require faith and repentance in order to baptism. I ask, of whom? The answer must be, of *adults;* for the Scriptures never require them of infants in order to anything. Then frames the argument thus:—The Scriptures require faith and repentance of *adults* in order to baptism. Now, infants are *gone*—they have nothing to do with the argument, or if they must (by the baptists) be brought in, the argument will run thus:—The Scriptures require faith and repentance of *adults* in

order to baptism, but as *infants* cannot have these, they are unfit subjects of that ordinance. Now, it is a glaring sophism, with adults in one proposition, and infants in the other.

"That infants should be supported, not only Scripture, but nature itself teaches; and yet, if we form the baptist argument on a few places of Scripture, it may be proved in opposition to nature and Scripture both that infants should actually be left to starve.

"We have nothing to do but to mention the texts and apply their reasoning to them. Isaiah i. 19, 'If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land.' 2 Thess. iii. 10, 'If any would not work, neither should he eat.' Take the first, and say with the baptist in another case: willingness and obedience are required of those who are to eat the good of the land; but since infants can neither will nor obey, they must not eat the good of the land. In the same way let the other be taken: he that will not work, neither shall he eat; infants cannot will to work, then infants must not eat.

"This argument, in whatever way it is viewed, proves against the truth. Is it a truth that infants should subsist?—This argument proves against it. Is it a truth that infants may be saved?—This argument

will prove the contrary. Were infants proper subjects of circumcision?—This argument will prove they were not. Then, if it invariably support a falsehood, we are compelled to say it is a false argument.

"Now these two arguments, namely:—

"1st.—A person who has a right to a positive institute must be expressly mentioned as having that right; but infants are not so mentioned, therefore they have not that right.

"2nd.—The Scriptures require faith and repentance universally, as requisites to baptism; but as infants cannot have these, they are not proper subjects of baptism. 'Infants,' say the baptists, 'cannot believe, cannot repent, and none should be baptized without faith," &c.

"These two arguments being taken away, a baptist has nothing left to place against infant baptism. I have not met with a single person who, when desired to produce the strongest arguments against infants, could advance anything more than what is contained in these two.

"While I thought it right to oppose the baptism of infants, I made use of them against it; but when they appeared—as they really are—very erroneous and bad, I gave them up, and from that time have never been

able to preach a baptizing sermon. I saw that the WHOLE strength of a baptist was gone."

These are the statements of a minister who experienced both sides, and was, therefore, well able to give a deliverance, and this he has done through close argumentation, showing, not only in these arguments, but throughout the whole of his book, that the baptism of infants is scriptural and reasonable.

Q. Does the baptists' stern and determined opposition to the infants arise, and is it maintained, by viewing them from a wrong standpoint?

A. Yes. Their objections are founded on the assumption that we pedobaptists make the performance of the rite not a means to an end, but the end or object itself; they keep out of view altogether its ulterior object. The teaching, the training of the child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, which requires that the parent be brought into a serious and solemn consideration of his religious responsibilities to his child, which belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ, it is his, not the child's faith that is called into exercise in the application of the symbolic rite of baptism. It is the Holy Spirit who is the agent in having the command of Christ carried out in behalf of the seed, and the seed's seed of believers, in bringing by the rite

face to face the parent and the child, and all this that the child, which is Christ's, may be trained up for him and his service. See Isaiah i. 2, "I have nourished and brought up children, saith the Lord."

Q. How did the Lord nourish and bring them up?

A. First of all they were entered as disciples into his school by circumcision at eight days old, and their parents and others taught them by the instructions laid down by Moses and the Prophets, as we read in John vi. 45, "As it is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God."

Q. Does the Scriptures show that this religious training was connected with circumcision?

A. Yes. See Rom. iii. 1-2, "What profit is there of circumcision? Much every way, chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God."

Q. Is baptism, as circumcision was, for the religious instruction and training of its subjects as well as a distinctive badge?

A. Yes. For the latter see Deut. vi. 7, "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shall talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up." See also Ps. lxxviii. 3-7, "What we have heard and known, and our fathers

have told us, we will not hide from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and His strength, and the wonderful works that He has done. For He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children, that the generation to come might know them—even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children, that they might set their hope in God."

These are spiritual duties and privileges connected with circumcision, shewing that the rite was the discipleship for the religious training of the children, and not merely as their title to the land of Canaan; and the same kind of training is continued in the christian dispensation. See Col. iii. 20, "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing unto the Lord;" also Eph. vi. 1, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord," and verse 4, "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Now, all this training and teaching of children comes after their enrolment into school—their initiation into discipleship. This was first done by circumcision, on the eighth day in the case of infants, and on any day in the case of adults.

Now, as the training still continues, why should any one think that the enrolment into school, the discipling, the initiatory rite should be done away with? The Lord commanded that it should be baptism and not circumcision. Thus a rite continued, therefore, also the subjects of the rite. First believers, then their children as before, there being no abrogation of the law of children's initiation.

We most emphatically concur with the following sentiments of Dr. Wardlaw. He says:—"I am strongly inclined to agree with those who regard the children of believers in the light of disciples. If their parents do their duty they surely are such. It is quite impossible for us to say how soon the Holy Spirit may begin his secret operations in the life of a child under spiritual training, and the subject of believing prayer; and, until the principles which are instilled into the child's mind by early tuition, recommended by a godly example and impressed by affectionate and faithful admonition, are either avowedly rejected or shown to be professed without influence on the heart and life, how can we be entitled to say that they are not disciples? They are learners, and, as far as we can judge, lambs of the flock of the 'Good Shepherd;' but in forming our estimate we must make allowances

for the peculiarities of childhood, and not foolishly look for the same manifestation of the power of the truth in a babe which we expect in a full grown man."

We have surely here some presumptive evidence in favour of infant baptism; for if children have this Christian standing, as lambs in the Saviour's fold, why deny them the Christian badge? If the Spirit's influences are there for them, and are meant to envelop them from their youth, and if Christian parentage opens special channels for their flow, "who can forbid water," that these babes should not be baptized who have the Holy Spirit provided for them to sanctify them as well as us?

Q.—Whether is the baptizing or the teaching first in Christ's great commission to disciple all nations?

A.—The baptism is first as the initiatory rite, as circumcision was first; as Abraham as a believer with his children, and the first christian believers with their households.

Q.—Is not the initiatory rite in Christ's commission kept in the relative position in which it stood for 2000 years?

A.—Yes: as the child was first circumcised and then taught, so baptism comes first, then teaching.

Of course the Gospel, when first preached, was to those who had ears to hear.

Q.—Since this order or arrangement has in no way been set aside, are not we still bound to adhere to it?

A.—Yes: there is no command forbidding, nor example excluding children from an initiatory rite into the religious relationship which was enjoyed up till Christ's time, and which was not then taken from them.

The mere fact of the first believers being baptized, does not in the least militate against this logical conclusion.

Q.—Does the rejection of infant baptism involve the assumption that there was not a child in any of the households recorded in Scripture as having been baptized?

A.—Yes. Apart from this assumption, their position totally breaks down

Q.—Would it set aside the pedobaptist's ground of support, supposing there had been no child in any of the recorded cases?

A.—No. Our position would remain still complete and perfect.

Then what a difference there is in our two positions.

Our opponents stand on the assumption that there was not a child in any of the households baptized, while we stand on the immoveable ground of principle, as manifested in the covenant relationship of children to their parents, revealed formally to Abraham as an everlasting covenant, binding on all future generations, and as made manifest by Christ introducing for circumcision the rite of baptism—baptism to "all the nations"—and which has been practised on infants in every age since that time, without a break, until now. From the first initiatory rite of circumcision by Abraham up till now, history nowhere speaks of any break. Seeing, therefore, that this relationship of the children, confirmed by initiatory symbol, has not been broken or repealed by Divine authority, it stands a principle in God's moral government, so that the positive rite of baptism keeps bound together parent and child.

Q.—Are we not fully warranted, both on scriptural and historical grounds, in concluding that infants are as proper subjects of baptism as they were of circumcision?

A.—Yes, we are fully warranted in such conclusion; and what is more, we have no warrant whatever for their exclusion.

Objection has been taken on philosophic grounds, that it can have no possible influence on an infant. This is indeed a very shallow fallacy. It is not the child but the parent in whom activity is required in the first instance.

"In the baptism of an infant, the parent is the object addressed, and the infant is only the subject of the ordinance; for therein Jehovah says to the parent, 'I will be a God unto thy seed after thee;' and there the parent presents his infant as an offering to the Lord.

"In this act, faith is necessary in the parent, but most assuredly not in the child, for to the infant there is nothing said, although much is said about it.

"Both in the word of the covenant, and in the visible token by which it is confirmed, Jehovah addresses the parent. In receiving the ordinance, therefore, the parent ought to have lively and vigorous faith in the God of the covenant, and his promises."

Faith in the parent is necessary to baptism, just as Abraham's faith was necessary to the circumcision of his seed.

Baptism is a token to confirm the faith of the parent in the promise of the covenant, just as circumcision was the token to Abraham and his seed.

It was a sign, or mark, or memorial of God's faithfulness. As God looks upon the bow in the clouds as his token or sign to us that he will not bring a flood to destroy all flesh again, so he looked upon circumcision as his token or sign to Abraham and his seed, that he would remember his covenant, and fulfil all his promises; and, on the other hand, when Abraham and his seed looked upon it, they would remember, and confide in God as their covenant God and Father, that He would be gracious, and would be their portion evermore.

Another objection, of a similar nature to that just considered, is also urged, viz:—That infants should not be made the subjects of a religious initiatory rite, because that would be treating them as if they were at that time capable of being taught; it would be putting them on the list of disciples before their teaching could begin.

Let us apply the same principle of reasoning to the case of Abraham, when he was commanded by God to circumcise Isaac on the eighth day.

Then we suppose Abraham saying to the all-wise God, "Lord, I differ from thee on this command. Isaac should not be made the subject of any religious initiatory rite so early as the eighth day, because 'that would be treating him as if he were capable of being

taught; it would be placing him on the list of disciples before his teaching could begin, when in reality he is totally incapable of knowing anything of Thy gracious promise and covenant.'"

With such an application of the baptist's principle of reasoning, there is instant exposure of the gross absurdity and presumptuousness of his argument. It stands forth in all its naked deformity, requiring no further demonstration.

How different the argument we have to advance. It will stand inspection and application. The more it is drawn out into detail the more it glows with truth and beauty. Let us to the proof.

Our argument may be stated thus:—"Before the coming of Christ the covenant of grace had been revealed, and under that covenant there existed a divinely instituted connection between children and their parents. The sign and token of the blessings of the covenant was, by Divine appointment, administered to children, and there can be produced no satisfactory evidence of this connection having been done away." Let us ask,—

Q.—What is the principle which forms the basis on which infants, along with their parents, are initiated in connection with the religious community?

A.—It is the near and intimate relationship which by the very constitution of our nature exists between parent and child; the parent being morally bound to act for the highest interests of his offspring.

Q.—When did a religious rite in this connection begin?

A.—With Abraham; and the rite was circumcision, a sign and token of the covenant of grace. See Gen. xvii. 7—"I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant; to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee." See also Lev. xxvi. 3, 12—"If ye walk in my statutes and keep my commandments, and do them, then will I walk among you and be your God, and ye shall be my people."

Q.—Was circumcision also an initiatory rite in connection with the religious community of the Jews?

A.—Yes; and although not of Moses, it continued throughout his dispensation.

Q.—Did the first circumcision require its subject to be a believer?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Was it instituted that the children should grow up and become believers before being circumcised?

A.—No; it was chiefly a children's institution, and that by Divine appointment.

Q.—Do you mean that the relative religious connection between children and their parents and the church is of Divine appointment, as well as the rite itself?

A.—Yes; the connection is the ordination of God.

Q.—Is there anything in Scripture limiting that connection to the patriarchal and Jewish dispensations?

A.—No. See Gal. iii. 14-18, 29—"That upon the Gentiles might come the blessing of Abraham in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; though it be but a man's covenant, yet when it hath been confirmed no man maketh it void, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham were the promises made, and to his seed. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many, but as of one; and to thy seed, which is Christ. Now this I say, a covenant confirmed beforehand by God, the law which came four hundred and thirty years after doth not disannul so as to make the promise of none effect; for if the inheritance is of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise, and if ye are Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and *heirs* according to the pro-

mise." And this accords with the nature of things as constituted by the all-wise and good Creator, so that it will continue as it has done while there are children, parents, and a church on earth.

Q.—And are the moral and spiritual duties and privileges arising out of the religious relation, and a rite recognising the same, as permanent as the relation itself?

A.—Most assuredly; for the religious relation of parent and child is the basis for these responsible religious duties and privileges.

Q.—And is the formal recognition of the relationship of households to their heads still continued?

A.—Yes. In every case recorded they were baptized, according to the command, "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them."

Q.—Has circumcision and baptism any correspondence in meaning?

A.—Yes, even baptists themselves admit it. Carson, one of the greatest baptist writers, says—"Circumcision and baptism correspond in meaning. They both relate to the removal of sin—the one by cutting, and the other by washing" (page 232). Noel, another great baptist writer says—"Circumcision to the Lord is similar to baptism to the Lord . . . . both are

initiatory rites of religious systems, and both are tokens of Divine covenants" (page 14).

That both are significant of purification see Col. ii. 11—"In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." And Matt. iii. 11—"He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." And Phil. iii. 3—"We are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit; and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Such is the spiritual import of circumcision; therefore its reference to the peculiarities of the patriarchal and Mosaic national covenant, so far as these and the mere land of Palestine is concerned, was a subordinate matter. "Its main design was to signify and seal the promise of deliverance from sin through the redemption to be effected by the promised seed of Abraham" (Hodge, p. 555).

It is a very great mistake to say that baptism has not come in the room of circumcision in its religious and spiritual signification. They were both instituted by the great Head of the Church to serve the same purpose, that of a visible token put upon them who are interested in the covenant of promise, the principal subjects of the rite being infants; baptism was intro-

duced when circumcision was about to be abolished; and baptism is expressly called the circumcision of Christ.

From the days of Abraham till Christ, circumcision was the token of the covenant, and at the beginning of the gospel our Lord commanded His apostles to disciple all the nations, not circumcising, but baptizing them.

Children, therefore, were included in the gracious covenant, as revealed under the Abrahamic and continued during the Mosaic dispensations, and consequently were, with their parents, connected to the congregation or church, although not, strictly speaking, members of it in the sense of active responsibility.

Then why should children in the Christian dispensation not have the initiatory rite of baptism, as well as the seed of Abraham who were included in the covenant of grace renewed with him. See Ezek. xviii. 4—"Behold all souls are mine, as the soul of the father so also the soul of the son is mine." Surely children belong to the Lord now, as well as in the patriarchal and Mosaic ages. But it would appear, according to the baptists, that God had changed His mind in reference to the discipleship of His children

by an initiatory rite, formally impressing upon parents' minds and hearts their responsibility for the religious training of his and their offspring. The Saviour, however, took very good care that the apostles should know what household initiation meant, and commanded them to "go and disciple all the nations, baptizing them." Surely Jesus did not cut off the promise in Isaiah xliii. 3—"I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring."

Q.—"But what," says the baptist, "have we, the uncircumcised Gentiles, who by faith are now the members of the Christian church,—what have we to do with the Abrahamic covenant? Are we not broken away altogether from Abraham's faith and his covenant, which had the sign of circumcision as the initiatory rite of infants?"

A.—"The Abrahamic covenant did not 'wax old and vanish away' like that which was purely and exclusively Mosaic. It existed centuries before the Sinaitic constitution, and was entirely independent of it; that it is the covenant of grace; and that in arguing from it we do not argue from one covenant to another, but from the same covenant in different states of its progressive revelation."

We are still by faith the children of Abraham and

heirs of the promise. See Rom. iv. 11-24, when, speaking of Abraham, it is said—"He received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believe though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also; and the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had, being yet uncircumcised. For the promise that he should be the heir of the world was not to Abraham and to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all. (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations). . . . . Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also to whom it shall be imputed if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead."

Q.—And is not the church in all ages represented as a cultured olive tree?

A.—Yes; it is so represented in Rom. xi.—"If some

of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and *with them* partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree, boast not against the branches; but if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. . . . Because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by *faith*.'

"Now these changes were limited to the branches; the good olive tree itself, root and trunk, remained identically the same. So in Eph. ii. 11-12, Gentile aliens are made 'fellow-citizens' with the Jewish children; but 'the household of God' in no way loses its identity, being based on Old Testament 'prophets,' as well as on New Testament 'apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.'

"While the Jewish church *stood*, the Gentile world could enter into this sonship of Abraham by faith, of which circumcision was but the external sign. And now Paul preached that the Gentile world shall enter in by faith, endorsed by a simpler sign, baptism; and a lighter ritual, the Lord's Supper. And of this new universal church, in which Jew and Gentile distinctions no longer exist, the ancient father still is Abraham."

We read in Acts vii. 38, of the church in the wilderness, thus—"This is he (Moses) that was in the

church in the wilderness with the angel." It was a sacred society, incorporated by a Divine charter, under a Divine government, and blessed with a Divine revelation.

Rom. ix. 4—"To them pertained the adoption and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law and the service, and the promises." Nothing more can be said of the church under the new dispensation.

Q.—Was the kingdom of God also extended from the Jews to the Gentiles?

A.—Yes. "'The kingdom of heaven,' or 'of God,' denotes the New Testament economy, being the general term under which it was first heralded by the Baptist and delineated by our Lord.

"It is not till after Pentecost, when Christian societies arose, that the name 'church' prevails.

"Both names, however, were applied to the Old Testament economy. Children belonged to the old, but they also belong to the new, for Jesus says, 'of such is the kingdom of God.'

"The kingdom and the church are not co-extensive; they differ in this respect, that the 'kingdom of God,' like all other kingdoms, includes the children of the subjects, while the 'church' is the society of the subjects themselves."

Properly speaking, therefore, baptism does not introduce an infant into the church, unless that word be used in a general sense; it rather recognises the infant as belonging to the kingdom, and to be trained up for church membership.

To this kingdom Christ himself declares that infants belong. See Matt. xxi. 43—"Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

Therefore, as in the kingdom under the Jewish dispensation, so now under the Christian dispensation infants are included. Baptists ask for express statements; then let us turn up Mark x. 13-14, where we have it on the highest authority on the subjects of the kingdom—"And they brought young children to him that he should touch them, and his disciples rebuked those that brought them; but when Jesus saw it he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God."

Then who shall forbid the ritual sign, that these should not be baptized who are thus divinely proclaimed as belonging to the kingdom?

Archbishop Whately remarked that "had an entire synagogue anywhere received Paul's gospel, it would

not so much have been a case in which a New Testament church was originated, as of an Old Testament church, with little or no change of form, becoming simply christianized."

The great Neander also expresses himself to a similar effect; and so also the greater Paul, who says, in Gal. iii. 16-19, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made, and if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

The bearing of all this on the present question will be seen at a glance. If the church retained its identity even after the middle wall of partition gave way; if the very synagogue, with its elders, could glide by an easy transition into the Christian church,—is it to be believed, in the absence of express intimation, that the immemorial principle and practice of *associating* children with their parents in the initiatory sign did not also pass as a matter of course into the Christian church?"

The advent of Christ, although destined to occasion "the rise and fall of many," in no way disturbed the existing ecclesiastical relations of parent and children, which was plainly intimated by Peter on the day of Pentecost, when he declared, in connection with baptism and the "poured out spirit," that "the

promise," as of old, was "unto them and to their children."

Such like passages distinctly and for ever insert the Christian church into sonship to Abraham.

We come now to the next question.

Q.—When Gentiles believed and became proselytes into the Jewish church, and were circumcised, were their male children circumcised along with them?

A.—Yes; and Dr. Lightfoot, one of the greatest Rabbinical scholars, says proselytes and their children before Christ came were both circumcised and baptized. So also says Calmet, Brown, Witsius, Reiskius, Stackhouse, Prideaux, Dr. Wall, Dr. Adam Clark, Maimonides, &c. (See public debate on Christian Baptism between the Rev. W. L. Maccalla and Alexander Campbell, London, 1842).

Q.—Why were females not circumcised?

A.—It was not appropriate to the female sex, because the rite, which was a cutting round of the male organ, which pointed to the coming seed from the loins of Abraham, with whom the covenant of grace was renewed. It was a memorial of the promise that Messiah should be made flesh amongst them.

Q.—But were there not other lines of descent from Abraham than through Isaac?

A.—Yes; and I doubt not that in the other lines of descent from Abraham, this rite, originally by the command of God administered to all his family, had its influence in a general way in preserving the idea and expectation of the promised seed. If this is granted, we have at once a good reason why circumcision should be *abolished* when this seed came—the Messiah. And why another rite, namely, baptism, should be substituted in its place, which rite continued to signify as expressively, or more so, the "putting off the body of the sins of the flesh," while it was not at all significant of that part of the meaning of the former symbol which had now received its fulfilment—the Messiah having come, who was the promised seed.

"The fact that circumcision was applied only to the male sex is of no consequence as to the argument for infant baptism; because females in that case, as in many others, were considered as represented by the male sex, and virtually included with them. Consequently the meaning of infant circumcision must have been perfectly the same as though it had been applied to persons of both sexes.

"This statement is corroborated by the children of the believing husband being holy, as recorded in

1 Cor. vii. 14—'For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband, else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.' The obvious meaning of the text is this, that in either case the believing element extends its sanctity to the household. The Jews applied the term 'unclean' to those outside their consecrated community, and 'holy' to those within it,—holy being often used in Scripture in this federal sense. The Jewish church children having had a recognized standing along with their parents," the mother because of the father's circumcision, and also the female children because of the circumcision of the males. Surely no one of understanding will say that the female portion of a family, whose males were circumcised, were left outside the consecrated community, being unclean, and therefore cut off. If not, it therefore follows that they were represented by the circumcised males. Let no baptist, then, find fault with baptism having in an important sense come in place of circumcision.

Q.—When parents believing in *Jesus* were baptized, was there any change made debarring their children from the rite?

A.—No, there is no command forbidding them, nor

example excluding them, from the Divine right of formal initiation.

Q.—Was there an express command needed for that which was already established, namely, the ritual connection between parent and child?

A.—No, there was no need.

Q.—If parents were to be deprived of an initiatory rite for their infant offspring, would that have needed an express command?

A.—Yes; and to have separated the connection without it would have been disobedience to God's revealed will, expressly given by precept and example.

Q.—Do baptists argue as if there never had been children initiated before?

A.—Yes; therefore it has been said that their Bible begins with Matthew; and as if it did so, they ask—Where do you find the babies?

Our answer is, that from all the converging rays of light which we have brought to bear on the subject in these and the following pages, we find the babies in the covenant of grace as renewed with Abraham and recognised by the church for two thousand years. And we also find them in the general command of Christ, "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them;" and we find them in

the testimony of Christian antiquity, which runs back to the age of the apostles.

Or our answer might be stated thus: we find the babies in the Old Testament expressly, and in the New Testament inferentially.

Had we not so found them, we would have needed an express command to initiate them for the first time; but an initiatory rite having been practised upon them for two thousand years, from Abraham to Christ, an express command was therefore not needed for their continued initiation, but only for the new rite, baptism —not new subjects—and an express command for the new rite was given in the great commission: "Make disciples of all the nations, *baptizing* them."

Q.—Is it not inconsistent for the baptists to ask an express command for the new rite of baptism being administered to infants, while they reject the infants altogether *without* a command?

A.—Yes, most inconsistent.

Q.—What about the baptists' inferential argument from those who were first baptized being believers?

A.—No inferential argument can set aside a positive command, and a divinely constituted initiatory religious connection of children and their parents to the church (it being, as we have said, in the very nature of things

as constituted by God), cannot be changed while there are children, parents, and the church in existence, it is only the outward rite that is very properly changed to suit the world-wide Christian dispensation.

Q.—But what do you say to the objection that the pedobaptists' theory and practice sets aside believers' baptism?

A.—Certainly it does, in the same circumstances in which infant circumcision sets aside believers' circumcision. In like manner the pedobaptist might retort and say to the baptist—Your theory and practice sets aside infant baptism, which would be a very great want indeed; for if children were not to be baptized they would (1), be left without an ordinance; (2), they would have no formal or ritual acknowledgment as belonging to God their Father nor the kingdom of Christ; and (3), parents would not by the ministers of the church be called to realise, as the Jewish parents had been, their covenant relationship to their children, and to God, and for God in their behalf; and (4), the spiritual responsibilities would not be *so* laid upon them as it would be by the ordinance of Christian baptism.

Q.—But does not the baptist act as if all this was worthless when he says that he can attend to the

interests of his children just as well without the ordinance?

A.—Yes, he says so, which reminds us of the Quakers, who say that they can do very well without the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and those who say that they can do without going to church; but such statements appear to us to reflect upon the wisdom and goodness of our loving Saviour who instituted these ordinances. Frail man needs all the symbolical and memorial helps which the Head of the Church has seen, in His wisdom, fit to ordain.

Q.—Does not the command to repent, believe, and be baptized, and the fact that believers were baptized by the apostles, prove that children were not to be kept in the same initiatory relationship as formerly?

A.—No it is not only no proof, but common ground, as much believed by pedobaptist as by baptist.

Q.—Why does it not prove it?

A.—Because circumstances change cases. There is no proof that the children of the first believers, when they grew up and became believers, were either commanded to be baptized or were baptized. Abraham, and proselytes to Judaism, were commanded to be circumcised, but their children were not, when they

grew up. Believers' circumcision and believers' baptism is quite consistent with infant baptism.

Q.—Was circumcision the token of God's claim upon the obedience and love of the families upon whom it passed?

A.—Yes; it was a standing witness that God had called them into His Abrahamic covenant to be His people, and that in their generations they were laid under solemn obligation to fear Him and sanctify themselves for His service.

Q.—Is not baptism, like circumcision, a visible sign that God is claiming us for Himself in a holy consecration, and enforcing obedience to the gospel upon His people and their seed generation after generation?

A.—Yes. God is first in His claim. It is not left to our voluntary choice as adults whether we are to be under obligation to be His: it is solemnly laid upon us in our infancy. From our birth we are claimed by the Lord to be discipled—enrolled into His school to be trained by the Word and Spirit for His Christian service. "A Jew's birth," said the Rev. Francis Johnston, baptist minister, Glasgow, "was his admission into the visible church." And again, "The Jews became members of the visible church when they were born."

It is evidently the Divine intention that the little ones of Christian parents should be trained in the faith of their fathers, inherit all their virtues, and avoid all their sins and backslidings, just as it was the will of God that Abraham's children should, in their generations, inherit Abraham's faith, and from infancy to old age possess the blessings of the ancient covenant.

So does the Lord claim the children of His new covenant people, that they should be heirs of the promises given to their fathers. It is out of the Divine order altogether that the church's children should, even for a day, become the children of the wicked one.

It is quite unnatural that they should come into the condemnation of the world by having their affections so far turned away from Jesus and His truth, as to "love the darkness rather than the light." Such a thing is not necessary, and ought not to be.*

Q.—Is there any proof in the New Testament, or out of it, that the rite of baptism was instituted only for believers?

* See "The Cross and the Crown: a brief Memoir of the Life and Triumphant Death of Mary Malcolm." To be had from the author, 108 Buccleuch Street, Glasgow.

A.—No.

Q.—And do baptists reject children without any proof against them?

A.—Yes, they do; they have not a single word against them, nor a single example; no, not one.

Q.—Is there any proof that the children of the first believers were commanded to be baptized, or were baptized when they had grown up and had also become believers?

A.—No; there is no record of it, either in the Scriptures or out of them.

"From Pentecost till the death of the apostle John covers the space of sixty or seventy years, surely time enough to allow the infants of many believing Christian parents to grow up to manhood, and be baptized on their own profession of faith; but there is no such case recorded in Scripture. No case of the child of Christian parents who was treated on the baptist's plan, and not on ours."

Q.—Is not this a very strong inferential proof or deduction, that they therefore were baptized in infancy?

A.—Yes; it is so.

Q.—How comes it that no mention is made of infants being baptized among the thousands on the day of Pentecost?

A.—The apostles observed order in their proceedings. It was not in throng and bustle, and pressure of such crowds, that they would baptize households. But it was when they got the household together that they baptized the whole of them, when their parents were first baptized; and in no case recorded did they leave even one of a family unbaptized from the eldest to the youngest.

Q.—As children, by an initiatory rite belonged, by divine command, to the religious community for about two thousand years prior to the Christian era, is it at all likely that they would be put out, and shut out of that connection without something being said about it?

A.—It is not only unlikely, but it would be most unreasonable and unnatural to suppose so. Therefore, no reference of the kind being recorded in Scripture, they are still in that connection.

Q.—Is their any evidence in Ecclesiastical or Church History for one hundred and fifty years after the death of the apostle John of infants being refused baptism by any church?

A.—No.

Q.—Is there any evidence in Ecclesiastical History which would lead to the conviction that infants were baptized during that time?

A.—Yes; the evidences we are going to give fall within the first century and a half from the time of the apostles, "and it is farther to be noted, that all of them testify to a practice then general, while some of them are of a purport that stretch back to the apostles' time, and thus bridge over the narrow gulf between the martyr Justin, and the apostle John."

And note this, that they are not opinions that we are going to give, but facts, all proving that infants were baptized from the days of the apostles.

The first is that of Justin Martyr in his "Second Apology," written less than 50 years after the death of the apostle John. He says, "many men and many women, sixty and seventy years of age, who were discipled to Christ from their childhood, still continue uncorrupt."

These Christian contemporaries of Justin must then have been born while holy apostles walked the earth. And being discipled from their childhood, it must have been by infant baptism; for it is not said they were instructed, but that they were discipled, or made disciples, the word being the same as that used in the commission, viz:—"Go ye and disciple all nations, baptizing them," where the word is expressly distinguished from "teaching." These old

men and women, then, who must have been young men and maidens while apostles yet lived, must have been discipled in infancy, by being baptized in infancy.

The next in order comes Irenæus, who was born early in the second century, the year 120,* and was therefore contemporary with Justin Martyr. He enjoyed the friendship and received the instructions of Polycarp,† who was an intimate disciple of the apostles, and received the episcopate of the church at Smyrna at the hands of the eye-witnesses and servants of the Lord.‡

The testimony of such a man as Irenæus is therefore of the very highest value, and he says, "Christ came to save all by Himself; all, namely, who by Him are *regenerated to God,—infants* and little ones, and boys and youths, and older men; therefore, He went through every age, being made an infant for infants, that He might sanctify infants,"§ &c.

This expression, "regenerated to God," considering the usages of the period, and of Irenæus himself, must mean baptism; because, he says in another place, "baptism, which is regeneration to God."

* See Brit. Cyclo., Biog. Division, Art. Irenæus.
† Coleman's "Christian Antiquities," Brit. Edition, page 118.
‡ Coleman's "Christian Antiquities," Brit. Edition, page 119.
§ Eusebius' "Eccles. History," Book III., Chap. 36.

Neander says, "regeneration and baptism are in Irenæus *intimately connected;* and it is difficult to conceive how the term 'regeneration' can be employed in reference to this, to denote anything else than baptism." That is what Neander says.

The next witness that we shall cite in favour of the prevailing practice of infant baptism is Tertullian. Tertullian lived within a century of the age of the apostles. He had a great dread of the heinousness of sin committed after baptism, and therefore wrote in favour of delaying the ordinance till after years.

Now this attitude of Tertullian is one of the very strongest possible proofs that infant baptism was prevalent in his day; and, as an evidence, is all the more valuable because incidental.

Our next witness is Origen. He was one of the greatest and most learned of the fathers, whose family had long been Christian, and who was born about 80 or 90 years after the apostolic age.

He testifies abundantly to the practice of infant baptism. "He resided in Alexandria, in Cappadocia, and Palestine; he travelled in Italy, Greece, and Arabia, and must have been in correspondence with the churches in every country,"*

* See Coleman's "Christian Antiquities," page 117.

The evidence of such an authority ought to be conclusive on the subject, and must be so to unprejudiced minds.

He says, "the church received a custom handed down from the apostles, to give baptism even to infants."

He appeals to infant baptism in proof of original sin. From this we may well conclude that "it was an uncontroverted usage of the church; for otherwise he could not, with propriety, have used it as an argument to establish another point."

We pass on now to Cyprian and the sixty-six bishops who met in council at Carthage about 150 years after the death of the apostle John. In answer to a query put to the council by Fidus, an African bishop, as to whether baptism, like circumcision, should be restricted to the eighth day, or be administered earlier, if need required, the decree of the council is as follows:—

"As for the matter of infants, whom you said were not to be baptized within the second or third day of their nativity, it hath appeared to us, in our council, quite contrary; no one maintained your opinion, but we all judged that the mercy and grace of God was to be denied to no man. But if anything can hinder men from baptism, it will be the heinous sins that will

debar the adult and mature therefrom; and if those who have sinned extremely against God, yet afterwards believe and are baptized, and no man is prohibited from this grace—how much more ought not an infant to be prohibited, who, being just born, is guilty of no sin, but of original, which he contracted in Adam? Wherefore, dearly beloved, it is our opinion that from baptism none ought to be prohibited by us, which, as it is to be observed and followed with respect to all, so especially with respect to infants and those that are but just born." *

Q.—Would the grandfathers of these bishops be contemporary with the apostles?

A.—Yes; because the council meeting was held only about 150 years after the death of the apostle John.

Q.—Is it in the least likely that infant baptism would begin in opposition to Christ's authority, and the practice of the apostles, and others under them, between the time of that council and the apostolic age, without opposition and distinct notification in history?

* See reference to this fact in Dr. John C. L. Giessieler's "Eccles. Hist.," vol. I., page 277; Moshiem's "Eccles. Hist.," sec. 3, part II., cap. 3; Neander's "Church Hist.," vol. I., page 428; Wall, part I., page 72; and Milner's "Church Hist.," vol. I., page 429.

A.—It would be altogether unreasonable to suppose so; because the change must have occurred either near to the time of that council or near to the time of the apostles, and in either case could not have failed to meet with distinct notice and opposition.

History contains no such notice, no such opposition; therefore the logical conclusion is that the practice of infant baptism could only have been established by Christ Himself, and inaugurated by His apostles.

"Cyprian, and consequently those other bishops contemporary with him, flourished about the year 240 or 250, and consequently about 80 or 90 years after the death of Polycarp, who was one of the apostle John's hearers and disciples, for he was martyred in the fourth persecution under Decius, the Emperor, which was in the year 168.

Now, can it be imagined that so many bishops could possibly be ignorant of what was the practice of the church in the apostle's days, so nigh unto which they lived? or can it be imagined that had they known infants were not baptized in their days, there should only arise a doubt among them about the time of its application, and none about the practice itself?" *

* "Infant Baptism from Heaven and not of Men," by Rev. J. Whiston London, Jonathan Robinson, 1675.

The unbroken links of this chain of cumulative evidence, geographically and historically considered, complete one great demonstration that is irresistible. "These testimonies cover a vast bridge of the Christian world. Greek and Latin fathers have but one voice. Origen tells us of the prevailing practice in Alexandria, Cyprian of that over North Africa, while numerous witnesses testify to the same practices all over the wide regions of Asia; and Neander says that in the Persian church 'infant baptism was, in the course of the third century, so generally recognised that the sect-founder, Mani, thought he could draw an argument from it in favour of one of his peculiar tenets.'"

Q.—Is it really the case that all this historical evidence remains intact, without contradiction?

A.—It was not testified against by any church in any region during these centuries, viz., between the council at Carthage and the apostles.

Q.—When were the first objections offered to infant baptism by any church?

A.—"In the year 1120, in France, one sect of the Waldenses declared against the baptism of infants because they supposed them incapable of salvation; but the main body of that people rejected the opinion as heretical, and the sect which held it soon came to

nothing." (Dr. Dwight's "Theology," page 537, quarto edition). "They taught that none could be saved but those who wrought out their salvation by a long course of self-denial and labour; and as infants were incapable of thus 'working out their own salvation,' they held that making them the subjects of a sacramental seal was an absurdity."

That the Waldenses did not exclude infants, we read that, in a confession presented to Ladislaus, King of Bohemia, 1508, the Waldenses teach "that children are to be baptized into salvation, and to be consecrated to Christ, according to His word, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God.'"

Molinœus, in his "History of the French Monarchy," tells, that when some urged the king to persecute these people, he sent Adam Funœus, Master of the Bills of Requests, and Parus, a Dominican Friar, to enquire into their tenets: that these proceeded to the places, and having completed their enquiries, reported, that among them infants were baptized, the articles of faith and ten commandments taught, the Lord's day observed, the word of God expounded, &c." ("The Parent's Guide to the Baptism of his Children," page 163.)

The next case noted in history of any church making objections to infant baptism as unscriptural is that of a sect which sprung up in Germany. (See "Dictionary of Sects, &c.," by J. H. Hunt, M.A., F.S.A., editor of the "Doctrinal and Historical Theology," London, 1874). In which we read as follows:—"The earliest historical notice of the anabaptists as a sect is in association with certain religious and civil disturbances, originating with the prophets of Zuickaw, which began in the year 1521, 360 years ago, and cumulated into a fierce civil war."

See also the "National Encyclopædia," Library Edition, vol. II., page 826, as follows:—"Their existence as a distinct sect commenced in Germany, in the days of Luther, under the name of anabaptists."

Q.—Do the baptists object to any of these testimonies as not being facts of history?

A.—No, not a single objection so far as I know.

Q.—Do they profess to have any historical testimony in their favour?

A.—Yes; the Rev. Dr. Landels, of London, and the Rev. T. W. Medhurst, formerly pastor of North Frederick Street Baptist Church, Glasgow.

We will give Dr. Landel's references in proof of the

baptist's position first. I quote from his pamphlet, "Baptism Rightly Received," Sept. 11, 1864. His first quotation is from "The Canon of a Catholic Council held in Paris in 829," as follows:—"In the beginning of the holy church of God no one was admitted to baptism unless he had been instructed in the sacrament of faith and of baptism."

Now the date of this Council being in the year 829 is certainly too far from the apostolic age to be of any value when compared with the early dates which we have given in our testimonies. Besides, there is not a word about infants in the statement, which is evidently about how adults were treated in order to their baptism. How Dr. Landels finds infants in the statement as not being baptized is something like having the "second sight." Again, if the Doctor's interpretation is correct, then the "holy catholic church of God" is a baptist church; but the "beginning of" what the Catholic council calls "the holy church of God" is nowhere found in the records of Christian antiquity as a baptist church, therefore Dr. Landels' reference is a failure.

His next quotation is from Wallafridus Strabo, an ecclesiastical historian of the 9th century, who says:—"In the primitive times the grace of baptism was

usually given to those only who have arrived at such maturity of body and mind that they could understand what were the benefits of baptism—what was to be confessed and believed."

Now the date of this writer being the 9th century is just another proof that the Doctor cannot produce primitive proof. If he cannot come nearer the apostolic age than the 8th or 9th century, he would have been wise in letting history alone altogether, for he only shows the barrenness of the baptist's position; and granting that the statements were true, namely, "that baptism in primitive times was usually given to those only who have arrived at such maturity of body and mind that they could understand," &c., such is what was the case in the primitive beginnings everywhere. The believers were usually first and in greater numbers baptized than households, or in other words, than children; it was the case with the apostles themselves. But there is nothing in the quotation against infant baptism. It is therefore failure number two.

The Doctor's next quotation is from Dr. Jacobi, in Kitto's "Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature." He says —"Infant baptism was neither established by Christ nor His apostles."

Now for Dr. Jacobi to write that, without a single

particle of proof, and for Dr. Landels to think that it will be received by intelligent inquirers as satisfactory proof against infant baptism, is an egregious mistake, and we cannot be wrong in dubbing it as failure number three.

The next quotation is from "Salmasius, a professor of history at Leyden." He does not say when he wrote, but it was as follows:—"An opinion prevailed that no one could be saved without being baptized, and for that reason the custom arose of baptizing infants."

Now the proper answer to that statement is, that "no historian has recorded this alarm of parents as the origin of infant baptism."*

Salmasius does not, however, say when nor where the opinion prevailed, neither does he mention it as being recorded by any historian, nor does he say by whom the practice of infant baptism was begun. The fact is, that no historian since the apostolic age has recorded anything of the kind; in so far as any such reference is concerned our position stands immovable; therefore we note this as failure number four on the Doctor's part.

* See Dr. Wardlaw on "Infant Baptism," page 148 in one edition, and page 125 in another.

His next quotation is made from Neander's "Church History," and is, if possible, still more unfortunate for the Doctor. It runs thus:—"Immediately after Irenæus, in the last years of the second century, Tertullian appears as a zealous opponent of infant baptism."

Why, this is one of our own arguments, already cited in our own favour. It at once conclusively demonstrates the fact that the practice of infant baptism prevailed prior to that time. Moreover, the very same record gives us clearly to understand why Tertullian opposed the practice; it was not on the ground that it was unscriptural, it was not on the ground that it was an innovation—something new.

As we formerly stated, Tertullian adopted the superstitious idea "That baptism was accompanied with the remission of all past sins, and that any sin committed after baptism was peculiarly dangerous;" hence he was in favour of delaying the rite till mature age.*

Q.—Was it for the reason just stated that he recommended the delay of baptism as peculiarly advantageous, especially in the case of little children?

A.—Yes; and hence he also advised, "That not

* See Dr. Miller, of Princeton, on "Baptism," page 22.

merely infants, but young men and women, and even young widows and young widowers should postpone their baptism until the period of youthful appetite and passion should have passed.* Therefore, in this reference Dr. Landels has simply made another failure.

The last of his references which we shall quote is from Dr. Barlow, Professor at Oxford, and afterwards Bishop of London. He says:—"I do believe and know that there is neither precept nor example in Scripture for infant baptism, nor any just evidence of it for about two hundred years after Christ."

Dr. Wardlaw's reply to a similar objection is a most conclusive answer to the foregoing (see page 123, Ed. 1825). "Curcellaeus remarks," says Mr. Cox, "that the baptism of infants in the first two centuries after Christ was altogether unknown."

"But of what account," says Dr. Wardlaw, "is the *gratis dictum* of Curcellaeus, or of any man? With regard to the first of these two centuries, which we may denominate the apostolic century, we claim the privilege, whatever Curcellaeus may remark, of forming our own judgment from the apostolic records themselves, till other and higher authority be produced; and as to the second, even supposing we were

* Dr. Miller, of Princeton, on "Baptism," page 22.

wrong in our interpretation of Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, what are we to make of Tertullian and Origen, in the beginning of the third?"

According to the remarks of Curcellaeus, the practice of infant baptism was altogether unknown till after the beginning of this century; which amounts to the same thing as saying that these fathers *witnessed its introduction*, and were aware of its being a practice totally new and unheard of before.

How then comes Tertullian to treat of its previous existence, without the remotest hint of its novelty or its partial extent? and how comes Origen to speak of it as "the usage of the church," and received as "an order from the apostles?" and how comes it, I ask further, that no baptist has ever been able to discover and to point out the time when infant baptism was introduced, or to trace the practice to any origin on this side the apostolic age?

Had nothing of the kind existed originally, then there was from the first, throughout all the churches, a standing practical testimony against it; yet not the slightest vestige is to be found by which its introduction into the Christian church, and its early and universal reception, can be traced.

The time of Tertullian was the time, not when it

began to be practised, but only to be questioned; and questioned not as unauthorized and unlawful, but on certain grounds of the author's own, as generally (for he admits of exceptions) inexpedient."

These arguments of Dr. Wardlaw complete a most satisfactory answer to Dr. Landels' quotation from Barlow, and most conclusively mark his sixth failure.

In these foregoing we have given the whole of Dr. Landels' proofs from "Ecclesiastical History" in favour of the baptist position, as against that of pedo-baptism; and in summing up he says, "with the testimony of such authorities before you, and these only specimens of those which might be cited, those of you who are acquainted with this controversy will wonder, I doubt not, at the confidence with which some of the writers speak of infant baptism as having existed from the days of the apostles."

What shall we say of these closing remarks? Why, that they are as weak as the testimonies produced, and which the irresistible logic of Dr. Wardlaw has already shattered to pieces.

Dr. Landels' authorities do not possess one fact in favour of his position; yet his whole case rests on "such authorities," and they are "specimens of others

which might have been cited." Just so; then all we have learned from Dr. Landels' references is, that "so and so speaks thus," or "the author says," or "an opinion prevailed." Truly it were prudence to keep the remaining specimens out of sight, as those quoted give only too strong evidence of the worthlessness of the entire lot.

With all these authorities, opinions, and surmises, we have not elicited even the shadow of a proof that infants were not baptized during the first and second centuries.

We come now to notice the arguments and references of the Rev. T. W. Medhurst, as elicited from him in reply to the Rev. Hugh Allen, D.D., who maintained the position of the pedobaptists.

Dr. Allen writes as follows:—"There is no information in the whole range of early church history to shew that infant baptism was an innovation, and not taught by the apostles themselves."

"If infant baptism was not taught and practised by the apostles themselves, this is entirely unaccountable; and taking history as a witness of facts, the inevitable and logical conclusion is that it was taught and practised by the apostles themselves."

To the foregoing, the Rev. T. W. Medhurst replied

thus:—"We point Hugh Allen to the Acts of the Apostles, the earliest church history extant, and we ask him to shew us the passage proving that infant baptism was taught and practised by the apostles themselves. He cannot grant us our request; he cannot quote a line to show us that the apostles knew anything of infant baptism. The Acts of the Apostles are profoundly silent on the question; therefore the inevitable and logical conclusion is that it was neither taught nor practised by the apostles."

Our remark on this reply is that it is entirely irrelevant. Dr. Allen formulated an argument from the records of early church history, but Mr. Medhurst never once adverts to such history. But more of this anon. To do justice to Mr. Medhurst, we will give the whole of his after extracts from church history. He says with Dr. Barlow, and quoting his words:—"I believe and know that there is neither precept nor example in Scripture for pedobaptism, nor any just evidence for it for about two hundred years after Christ."

This is the argument already used by Dr. Landels, and already thoroughly disposed of by Dr. Wardlaw, and therefore requires no further comment.

Mr. Medhurst's next reference is to Neander, and is as follows:—"It cannot possibly be proved that infant baptism was practised in the apostolic age."

He might in the same sense have said that it cannot possibly be proved that female communion was practised in the apostolic age,—that is, it cannot possibly be proved in an express, direct, or pointed manner, in direct terms, plainly. For example—The disciples, men and *women*, met together to break bread at the Lord's Supper; or, all the jailor's family were baptized, and one of them was an *infant*. No doubt this was what Neander meant—that it could not in that express manner be proved. Yet, notwithstanding, baptists believe that they have sufficient evidence of an inferential nature that women did sit down to the Lord's Supper; and pedobaptists believe they have sufficient evidence without the terms "infant" or "child" was baptized.

In view of all this, the mere assertion of Neander, that the thing itself cannot be proved, is simply worthless. Moreover, such argument on the part of Medhurst is a glaring case of *petitio principii*, that at once discovers the weakness of his position. Moreover, Dr. Allen's argument was founded on early Church history; whereas Mr. Medhurst avoids touching on

that ground, and merely contents himself by saying that Neander says "so and so."

Mr. Medhurst's next statement runs thus:—"The late introduction of infant baptism, the opposition it met with still in the second century rather speaks against an apostolic origin."

Now, we ask, how does either Neander or Mr. Medhurst know that its introduction was late? Neither of them offer the least proof, and for a good reason, they cannot. History makes no statement of infant baptism beginning at any time after the apostolic age.

How, then, do they say it was late? What opposition does he refer to as having been offered in the second century. Tertullian, as we have already seen, established the fact that infant baptism existed prior to his time, by the opposition he offered; but that opposition was not based on the ground that it was an innovation, but on an idea that had got into his mind (as we have already explicitly noted) that sin committed after baptism was of a peculiarly heinous nature, and it would therefore be better to defer it.

The next quotation Mr. Medhurst makes is from Professor Lange, and runs thus:—"All attempts to make out infant baptism from the New Testament fail. It is totally opposed to the spirit of the apostolic

age, and to the fundamental principles of the New Testament."

In reply, we have to notice, in the first place, that here again Mr. Medhurst carefully avoids any reference to early church history, which is at present the point in question; and in the second place, we have to notice that the statement is a mere unfounded assertion, and not only so, but contrary to the truth; in witness whereof see the numerous foregoing evidences as logically deduced, and which can only be set aside by unwarrantable assumption, and by ignoring infantile claims all along recognised from Abraham up till now by God himself, by Jewish dispensation, and by the present enlightened era of the great preponderance of the Christian world.

His next quotation in opposition to Dr. Allen's statement is from Professor Hahn, of Breslau, and which runs thus:—"Neither in the Scriptures nor during the first one hundred and fifty years is a sure example of infant baptism to be found; and we must concede that the numerous opposers of it cannot be contradicted on gospel ground."

A child might see that there is not one atom of argument in this question. The fact that one hundred and fifty years after the death of the Apostle John

the general practice of infant baptism was at that time unanimously attested by the sixty-six Bishops met in council at Carthage, as we have already proved; very numerous examples must therefore have taken place long, long before that time. But if there were no infants baptized during the first one hundred and fifty years, then all the churches at that time would be baptist churches. How, then, is it possible that every one of them should have renounced what they considered to be the apostolic doctrine and practice of only believers' baptism, and not a single sentence about it recorded in history? how is it possible that such could have happened and no person to know anything about it, or, if knowing, to give no hint of it in history? Such appears to us to be morally impossible.

But we, in our turn, now ask where is there the slightest proof that the practice began at the lapse of one hundred and fifty years? History nowhere says it began then. History nowhere makes the least mention of its having begun at any time after the apostolic age. We challenge the whole baptist school of theology to contradict this by a single proof. If it did begin one hundred and fifty years after the days of our Lord, such an important innovation never

could have escaped notice and wide discussion, and would have been prominently noticed in the early church history; therefore, this very silence is an invaluable incidental proof that it was the practice all along, and did not begin at any subsequent period.

Mr. Medhurst's appeal—or pretended appeal—to early church history has resulted in no sign or sound in his favour; he simply points to its silence in respect of recovering any example of infant baptism for one hundred and fifty years—a silence which is to every keenly critical mind of significant importance to the position of pedo-baptists. Moreover, it is a fact that, although Mr. Medhurst broods over this sealed and voiceless history, it is neither sealed nor voiceless.

In the few foregoing pages we have cited unquestioned evidences, narrated in these early histories, leading most unmistakably to the conclusion that infant baptism was practised from the very earliest period; in other words, the conclusion is, that the facts of history give credible evidence to the practice of infant baptism from the days of the Apostles, and that infant baptism is Scriptural.

Q.—But is not the above argument from early church history somewhat invalidated by the circumstance

"that in Cyprian's time (it is said) they admitted infants to the Lord's Supper. ?"*

A.—No, our position is rather confirmed by it. "Scripture teaches us, and the concurrence of almost all churches recognises it as a law, that none can be admitted to the Lord's Table till the token of Christianity has been put upon him in baptism. Therefore we may conclude that the giving of the Lord's Supper to children is a proof that in those churches which allowed this they had been previously declared to be the Lord's by the sign of baptism." Besides, "Historical evidence for children's communion is greatly inferior to that in favour of infant baptism. We have no evidence as to its universal or even general reception at all equal to that in favour of infant baptism."†

Q.—But is it not also objected that many of our arguments for infant baptism are equally conclusive for infant communion ?

A.—This objection would be of some weight if it could be shown that baptism and the Lord's Supper were both initiatory rites, and were in other respects the same, but not otherwise.

Now, after all the light we have had from early

* See M'Lean on "Baptism," vol. III., page 211.
† See Dr. Miller, of Princeton, on "Baptism," page 22.

church history, and Old Testament history, including the gracious covenant, still existing, which was renewed with Abraham, we must be in a better position to understand those passages in the New Testament that relate to infant baptism, than to look at them abstractly without side lights.

In this way we will be likely to understand them in the light in which the apostles themselves understood them.

We will, therefore, proceed to the examination of some of them. We will begin with the great commission given by our Lord to the apostles to baptize, in Matthew xxviii. 19 (revised edition)—"Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them."

Now, as children up to this time had been the subjects of a religious initiatory rite, and nothing in the command against them, it follows, by logical deduction, that they are still *included*, and the whole question of infant baptism, on these two facts, ought, in every reasonable, candid, and unprejudiced mind, to be a settled question.

Q.—But is it not objected by baptists that infants cannot be made disciples (which means scholars), seeing they are not capable of being taught?

A.—Yes; and the reason is that they treat the word disciple as if it had only one meaning, the same as they do with the word "baptize," whereas both words have more meanings than one—the latter means both mode and the effect of mode; both dip or immerse, and, wash, cleanse, or purify, without any reference whatever to mode. So the word disciple does not necessarily intend *previous* learning, nor present learning, but also learning in *design*, those who have not yet begun to learn, but who are entered for that purpose; so that the idea of immediate learning does not necessarily annex itself to the term disciple or scholar—it may mean nothing farther than to denote a person who is entering into school with a view *to learn.* The infant, by baptism, is received into *discipleship*, *i.e.*, to be a scholar in a Christian school.

In Numbers iii. 28, we read—"In the number of all the males, from a *month* old and upwards, were eight thousand and six hundred, keeping the charge of the sanctuary." Can any one tell me how a child of a month old could be a *keeper* of the "charge of the sanctuary?" Certainly he could not otherwise be called a keeper, but as one *designed* and appointed to that service, being Levites; and, although only a

month old, they were enrolled in the class of Levites *designed* for "keeping the charge of the sanctuary."

Matthew Henry, in his commentary on this passage, says, "Let not little children be hindered from being enrolled among the *disciples* of Christ, for such was the tribe of Levi, of such is the kingdom of heaven. The redemption of the first-born was reckoned from a month old (ch. xviii. 15-16), therefore, from that age the Levites were numbered. Surely if there is a sense in which the words "keeping the charge of the sanctuary" could be used to those of a month old, surely the word disciple, in a modified sense, may be applied to an infant. Some think that the word disciple, in Acts xv. 10, takes in children, namely, "Why tempt ye God to put a yoke on the neck of the disciples?" (viz., circumcision). Now, as infants were circumcised, it is thought they are included in the term disciples."

Another objection, to our view, of Matt. xxviii. 19, is, that there is no command in the passage for infants to be baptized. Infants are not referred to in the commission, therefore they are to be rejected.

But we might reply, on the same principle, that believers are not to be baptized, because they, as such, are not specified in the passage. The word

belief, or believeth, is not in the passage, any more than the word infant, or children. Aye! but, says the objector, we find believers or believeth in other passages, and we explain this one in the light of them. Just so, the very thing we are doing; we read the passage in the light of other passages, where we find the children initiated in connection with the community of God's people from Abraham to Christ, and in ecclesiastical history from that to this. Precisely so.

Let us now return to the words of the commission and examine them carefully to see whether children are excluded or included. The words, according to the revised version, are "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them." Now, when we view this passage in the light in which proselytes were gained over to Judaism, which included their children, we have every reason to believe that the apostles, who were Jews, and had, therefore, been circumcised on the 8th day, would understand the commission to include the children of believers. Besides, the mere change of the rite cannot, for a moment, be held as a sufficient reason for throwing out the subjects of the kingdom altogether, as if the rite was of greater

importance than the moral and immortal beings whose interests were, by ritual acknowledgment, guarded and secured for 2000 years previously.

Q.—Is the command to "disciple all the nations, baptizing them," an express or explicit command?

A.—Yes.

Q.—Is it explicit as distinguishing adults from infants, or males from females?

A.—No. But as nations are made up of adults and infants, male and female, it therefore includes them all, unless some reason is given why it cannot.

Q.—Do you therefore understand this passage as a command to baptize infants as well as others?

A.—Yes, as there is no proof to the contrary, and also from the fact that infants were all along included in the gracious covenant renewed with Abraham; nay, more, the initiatory rite was specially the children's rite.

Q.—Do you mean that the command is as much for infants as for women?

A.—Yes; no logic in the circumstances can turn it aside.

Q.—Is it as much a command for infants as for men?

A.—Yes, and *more* so, because circumcision was

principally a children's ordinance; and, excepting the first believers where the Gospel is first preached, baptism, according to all history, is also principally a children's ordinance, and was without opposition from any church for at least 1100 years from the commencement of the Christian era.

Q.—Does it then follow that the command of Jesus is a "Thus saith the Lord" for the baptism of *men*, without expressly naming them?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And is it as much a "Thus saith the Lord" for the baptism of *women*, without expressly naming them?

A.—Yes.

Q.—And is it as much a "Thus saith the Lord" for the baptism of infants, without expressly naming them?

A.—Yes; for neither logic, history, nor Scripture contradict it—nay, they all prove it.

Dr. Morison's exposition in his commentary on this passage—Matt. xxviii. 19—"Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them," &c.;* *disciple all the nations*, that is, *and bring all the nations into a condition of disciplehood*—of disciple-

* The same as the Revised Edition.—Ed.

hood to me. It brings beautifully into view men's fundamental need of education—of education under Christ. All men need to become pupils of Jesus Christ; all, without exception. *Disciple all the nations.* It will be noted that this expression does not mean, and cannot mean, *make disciples from among all the nations.* It brings into view a much wider aim, an aim that terminates on men without distinction or exception. *Baptizing them:* The antecedent of the *them* is, of course, *all the nations,* but it is *all the nations* considered as *disintegrated into the individual persons* who compose them. *Into the name of the Father,* &c.: *Into,* not *in,* as in our authorised version. This baptizing is one of the means by which all nations are to be *discipled.* They are to be discipled *by* being baptized, &c.; that is to say, the *discipling* is not here represented by our Lord as the antecedent, it is represented as the consequent, of the baptizing. The nature of the case implies, however, that, so far at least as *adults* are concerned, they cannot be entered into the school of our Saviour without their intelligent consent. But when Carson asserted that "newly-born infants are not scholars in any school" (Baptism, p. 257), he singularly forgot that real education, and, of course, moral and spiritual education, begins with

the very beginning of self-conscious existence. The first stroke of the painter's brush, when he begins his landscape or his portrait, is not a picture, but it is the beginning of a picture. The first impression on a child's mind is not a complete education, but it is the beginning of it. *Teaching them*, &c.: The baptising is not intended to be an ultimate act; it is only initiatory. It is needful that it should bud out into the flower and fruit of "teaching to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded." *Teaching them*—that is, *all the nations*—each individual, in the way in which his heart and conscience can be best approached and entered—adults in one way, children in another; all need to be taught in the interest of Christ."

The following is from Benson's commentary on the same verse as the above. Verse 19,—"Go ye, therefore, and teach—Greek, "disciple," or "make disciples of;" or, as Dr. Doddridge renders it, "proselyte all nations." *Baptizing* and "teaching" are the two great branches of that general design, and these were to be determined by the circumstances of things, which made it necessary, in baptizing adult Jews or heathens, to teach them before they were baptized; in discipling their children, to baptize them before they were taught, as the Jewish children in all ages were first circum-

cised, and after taught to do all God had commanded them. It must be observed that the word rendered *teaching* * in the next verse, though in our translation confounded with the word used in this verse, is yet a word of a very different sense, and properly implies "instructing," which the word used in this verse does not necessarily imply, but, as has been observed, merely to "proselyte" or "make disciples." The argument, therefore, that some draw from this verse, as if our Lord enjoined all to be taught before they were to be baptized, is without foundation. Our Lord's words, taken together in both verses, distinctly enjoin three things, and that in the following order:— To "proselyte" men to Christ, to "baptize" and to "teach" them. It is true, however, that adult persons, before they can be made Christ's disciples or be proselyted, must be instructed and brought to "believe" the great essential truths of Christianity, and even to profess their faith in them. But the case is different with infants, who may be admitted to baptism as the children of the Jews were to the rite of circumcision, and be instructed afterwards."

The next is from Dr. Adam Clark's commentary on the same verse, viz., Matt. xxviii. chap., 19th verse—

* In our Authorised Version.—Ed.

"Go ye, therefore," &c. "It is natural to suppose that *adults* were the first subjects of baptism; for as the Gospel was, in a particular manner, sent to the Gentiles, they must hear and receive it before they could be expected to renounce their old prejudices and idolatries and come into the bonds of the Christian covenant; but certainly no argument can be drawn from this concession against the baptism of *children*. The apostles . . . . . must necessarily understand that *infants* were included (in the commission); nor could they, the custom of their country being considered, have understood our Lord differently, unless He had, in the most express terms, said that they were *not* to baptize children, which neither He nor His apostles ever did. And as to the objection, that the baptized were obliged to profess their faith, and that therefore only *adults* should be baptized, there is no weight at all in it; because what is spoken of such, refers to those who, only at that period of life, heard the Gospel, and were not born of parents who had been Christians; therefore they could not have been baptised into the Christian faith, forasmuch as no such faith was at their infancy preached in the world."

Dean Alford, D.D., on the same verse, says:—

"Baptizing them." "The making disciples consists of two parts—the *initiatory* admissory rite and the *subsequent teaching.* It is much to be regretted that the inadequate rendering "teach" has, in our Bibles, clouded the meaning of these important words. It will be observed that, in our Lord's words as in the Church, the process of ordinary discipleship is *from baptism to instruction, i.e.*, is *admission in infancy to the covenant*, and *growing up into observing all things commanded by Christ*—the *exception* being, what circumstances rendered so frequent in the early Church, *instruction before baptism* in the case of *adults.* On this we may also remark that baptism, as known to the Jews, included, just as it does in the Acts (chap. xvi. 15, 33), *whole households—wives and children.*"

Dr. Lightfoot, on the same verse, viz.,—"Go therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them" (A.V.), "that is, *make disciples*—bring them in by baptism, that they may be taught. They are very much out who, from these words, cry down *infant baptism*, and assert that it is necessary for those that are to be baptized to be *taught before* they are *baptized.* 1. Observe the words here, *make disciples;* and then after *teaching* in the 20th verse. 2. Among the *Jews* and also with *us*, and in all nations, those are made

disciples that they may be taught." — Page 364, "Clark's Com."

As for the additional statement of the commission in Mark, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" ("condemned" Revised Edition).

As this part of the commission refers to adults, who at that time required to believe in order to baptism, there is no need for comment. It is common ground. The introduction of the Gospel and Christian Baptism by the Apostles required believers to be baptized; but we dissent from the baptists' *inference*, that, therefore, infants were not, and ought not to be baptised.

That which is awanting in Mark's statement is supplied in Matthew's by the word "disciple."* "Make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them," and I have given sufficient proof on that passage that it *includes* infants. To say that Mark's statement *excludes* infants is virtually saying that it contradicts Matthew's statement. Surely Matthew does not exclude believers although he does not name them; but on the principle of our opponents he does exclude

* The word "teach" in our Authorised Version is not correct, the Greek word means "disciple."

them, not having mentioned "believeth" or "believer" in the commission as stated by him. As well say that Paul excluded all others from the love of Christ when he said, "He loved *me* and gave himself for *me*."

Q.—What does the latest deliverance of the baptists say upon Christ's commission to the apostles to baptize?

A.—It is given in a book entitled "The English Baptists: Who they are, and what they have done, being eight lectures—historical and descriptive—given by general baptist ministers in London during the past winter."* The lecture from which we quote is entitled "Baptists: Their Distinctive Principles," by the Rev. John Batey. Page 42, he says:—"Now, we will first refer to the commission of Christ respecting baptism. It reads:—'Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them,' &c. So Matthew.

"It is equally explicit in Mark, and by its very terms excludes infants. 'Go ye,' said the Saviour, 'into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.' These words so positively restrict baptism to *believers* that many of the most pious and learned pedo-baptists have admitted it. Baxter says:—'This is not like

* London: E. Marlborough & Co., 51 Old Bailey, 1881.

some occasional historical mention of baptism, but it is the very commission of Christ to his apostles for preaching and baptizing, and purposely expresseth their several places and order. Their first task is by teaching to make disciples, which are, by Mark, called believers; the second work is to baptize them, where to is annexed their salvation,' &c. . . . . 'It is one sort of faith, even saving, that must go before baptism, and the profession whereof the minister must expect." Dr. Dwight says:—'Here they were to make disciples of mankind first, and then baptize them, and thus seal their discipleship.' It is certain, therefore, that if infant baptism be Scriptural, it cannot be proved by this commission. This excludes them."

My Reply.

The above is Mr. Batey's entire exposition of the commission, and it will be evident to every reader that the whole of it is based on Mark's statement.—"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"—and he ignores Matthew's statement altogether, unless he is taking the word *teach* in our Authorised Version to be a correct translation of the Greek word, which, correctly translated, is *disciple*,

and is so translated in the Revised Edition, thus—"Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them."

But there is no mention of teaching *before* baptizing in Matthew's statement, it is not a "Thus saith the Lord" that teaching is before baptizing, and there is not a Greek scholar that will demonstrate that there is. But at the introduction of Christianity, Mark's statement was as necessary as Matthew's, because, adults to whom the Gospel was first preached must believe before they are baptized, just as Abraham and proselytes believed before they were circumcised; but it did not follow that infants were not circumcised, not only so, but before Christ's time they were also baptized. Pedo-baptists cordially believe both Matthew and Mark's statements. The Jews especially required Mark's statement to relieve them from circumcision, baptism being all that was necessary. The want of circumcision did not prevent their salvation.

Dr. Young, a noted Greek scholar, says, on Matthew's statement:—"The great object sought is to make '*disciples*'; this is to be done, *first*, by baptising them, and *then* teaching them; not by reversing the process, as some attempt to do. A 'disciple' is simply one brought to the school of Christ to be fitted to serve

Him; baptism is the designation of his being received for this purpose; and when he is '*taught*' to observe all things that Christ commanded, and acts up to his knowledge, then is he a disciple indeed."

I accuse Mr. Batey of unfairness to his readers in passing over the commission in Matthew and not critically expounding it, but surface work is quite consistent with our opponents' expositions of passages which they set forth as conclusive against infant baptism, while the fact is that there is not a sentence in the Book of God *against* it; and I challenge Mr. Batey or any other to prove that there is. All that they can do with Matthew's statement of the commission is to *infer*, however illogical that may be, that because believers were commanded in other passages to be baptized, and were baptized, *therefore* infants were not, and ought not to be, baptized.

I cannot help remarking here, how content our baptist friends are with their *inference* when it suits them, notwithstanding they are without an express command or example against the little ones who, by express command and example, were so long as 2000 years initiated in connection with their parents and the religious community.

I also accuse Mr. Batey of misrepresenting Dr.

Dwight; for just six pages after the unfair limitation of the meaning of his quotation, the Dr. writes thus:—. "A public declaration of our cordial belief in the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel is what is usually called in this country a Profession of Faith, the ground on which, indispensably, *adults* are admitted to baptism. . . . . The *infant* children of believers are also Scriptural subjects of baptism.

It was therefore in reference to *adults only* that the quotation made by Mr. Batey referred, and not that it *excluded* infants, as Mr. Batey quoted it to teach.

If Dr. Dwight does not contradict himself, then Mr. Batey makes an untruthful statement against the Dr., and judging by the same principle, he makes an untruthful statement against Mark, when he says that Mark's statement "*excludes* infants." It is to be hoped that more care will be taken by the reverend gentleman, and others of the same class, in future. He also quotes Mr. Baxter on Mark's statement of the commission, but carefully avoids quoting *any authority* on Matthew's statement of it, which, to me, is very *significant.*

Mr. Batey's good council, recorded on the previous page of his lecture, viz., 41, is as follows:—"Our inquiry must not be, 'What saith the Church?' but

'What saith the Lord?'" Yet the very first thing he does is to point out to his readers that "many of the most pious and learned pedobaptists have admitted it," namely, that the commission "restricts baptism to *believers* . . . . that it *excludes* infants."

But, I reply, their admission is not a "Thus saith the Lord," He appeals to uninspired *authority*, the very thing Mr. Batey warns us against; but he knows the power of authorities, and he therefore appeals to them, and as he says *nothing* upon Matthew's statement of *discipling* all the nations, which he ought, as an honest man, to have done; for without it he has not dealt fairly with the commission, and consequently has proven himself an unsafe guide to his readers. I have, therefore, got nothing to reply to, but refer him to the cumulative arguments in my book.

He also says, in page 47, "Alas! as old as infant baptism is, it cannot be traced to the days of the apostles. *It is extremely doubtful whether it is even named for two hundred years after Christ.*" Now, according to this statement, all the churches would be baptist churches until a century and a half after the death of the apostles. But that is unquestionably contradicted by the fact which I have proved

previously, of no less than 66 churches, reckoning a church for each of the 66 bishops met in council at Carthage, 150 years after the death of the apostle John. Now, it is morally impossible that all these churches could have risen up in *opposition* to the existence of all the other churches, if they were baptist churches, without strong opposition from them to what they would regard as a serious and alarming departure from apostolic doctrine and practice. Such could not have been without remarks upon it by some one or more of the 66 bishops, and others. But, instead of that, there was not a single vestige remaining, at that time, of all the supposed baptist churches, if they had existed at all; and, if all the churches were baptist churches, how did they all, every one of them, disappear—cease to exist? They must either have become pedobaptist churches, or have died out, for the existence of a "baptist" church is not to be found for at least 1100 years from the establishment of churches by the apostles. That a universal renunciation of apostolic doctrine and practice could have taken place, and pedobaptism received and practised by every one of the supposed baptist churches, and not a single syllable of it recorded in church history, is morally impossible.

The only legitimate conclusion which can be drawn from these statements, which cannot, in truth, be contradicted, is, that there were no baptist churches in existence during these centuries; and we have, in the preceding pages, given sufficient evidence that the first baptist church arose in France, in the year 1120. At least, so far as we know from history, infant baptism must, therefore, have been practised by the apostles and all the primitive churches; and I challenge any one to prove the contrary. But should some ancient history turn up to prove that shortly after the second century and a half there were some baptist churches, it would come too late to be of any service in proving pedobaptism to be unscriptural. We, therefore, feel ourselves standing upon a very broad basis of scriptural and historical truth.

PETER'S TEACHINGS AT PENTECOST.

The late Dr. John Guthrie, in his book on "Baptism," page 164, says—"From the commission we naturally proceed with some interest to its incipient fulfilment at Pentecost, to see if, on that day of the New Testament kingdom, there be any hint as to its inclusion of infants." Any hint? Why, we have an express recognition of the fact. In Acts

ii. 38-39, when gathering in his first-fruits, when dealing with his first converts, in answer to their anxious enquiry, "What shall we do?" Peter tells them to "repent and be baptized, every one of them, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins;" and, as if opening out the meaning of the baptismal rite, he adds, "and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Here, then, is a cordial welcome to the first Christian proselytes—but what of their families? The apostle leaves them in no dubiety on this head. The families shall be on the same footing as before; for "the promise," he goes on to say, is "*unto you and to your children;*" words here associated with the setting up of the New Covenant, and with its initiatory rite of baptism, just as the corresponding words, "*to thee and to thy seed after thee,*" were associated with the setting up of the Old Covenant, and with its initiatory rite of circumcision. I know that it will be replied that Peter's words mean no more than that the Gospel would pass from parents to children, and Christianity propagate itself onward and downward to the end of time; but this bald truistic interpretation—entirely ignoring, as it does, the household principle of the old economy, and its hold on the Jewish mind, and

how natural and animating it would be to re-affirm it on the setting up of the New Testament kingdom—I can never accept as anything better than a shallow caricature of this precious and far-reaching text."

But an objector says to this exposition, "What have babes to do with an ordinance which, with repentance, is "For the remission of sins?" He might as well ask what had Jesus to do with an ordinance which, with repentance, is "for the remission of sins?" Or what had Isaac to do with an ordinance which required *faith* in his father? Or, why were infants made the subjects of an ordinance by the command of God when they knew nothing at all about what was done.

The position which our baptist friends have taken is a standpoint from which they cannot understand these questions. Whereas, from the pedobaptist position, as opened up in the preceding pages, is seen the wisdom, goodness, and fatherly care of God over his offspring. And our object in writing upon the subject is to aid them in coming to our position, that they also may see the wisdom, goodness, and fatherly care of God as we see it, and that our contentions may cease, and brotherly love and unity take their place.

Dr. Houston's* remarks on the passage (viz., Acts ii. 38), are as follows—"'Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; for the promise is to you, and to your children.' These words, addressed to Jews, plainly declare a present interest of children, with their parents, in the promise; and this is urged as a reason why they should be baptized. It is not said, the promise is to you, and *will be* to your children when they believe; but it is to you, and your children which you now have; it is to them *now*, equally as to you. In virtue of the comprehensive promise, 'I will be a God to you and your seed,' the parents are entitled to be baptized, and are urged to a participation in the ordinance. On precisely the same ground, their infant children are likewise entitled to the baptismal rite. The interest in the promise is as good a reason why *they* should be baptized as their parents. The promise certainly belonged to the infant seed of Abraham, and thus to the infant children of his spiritual seed. The application of the rite of baptism is co-extensive with the promise. By no proper interpretation of the words, considered as

* Pastor of the Reformed P. C., Knockbracken.

addressed to Jews, can they be taken as referring only to children when they believe."

Matthew Henry, in his Commentary, says—"Your children shall still have, as they have had, an interest in the covenant, and a title to the external seal of it . . . . for the promise of the remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost is '*to you and to your children.*'" It was very express (Isa. xliv. 3)—"*I will pour my spirit upon thy seed.*" And (Isa. lix. 21)—"*My spirit and my word shall not depart from thy seed, and thy seed's seed.*"

When God took Abraham into covenant, he said, "*I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed*" (Gen. xvii. 7); and, accordingly, every Israelite had his son circumcised at eight days old. Now, it is proper for an Israelite, when he is by baptism to come into a new dispensation of this covenant, to ask, "What must be done with my children? Must they be thrown out or taken in with me?" "Taken in" (says Peter) "by all means;" for the promise, that great promise of God's—being to you a God—is as much to you and to your children now as ever it was.

It must appear very plain to every unprejudiced person, that the great promise of the covenant of grace renewed with Abraham, includes all the

promises which were given afterwards for the development of that great *general* promise, "I will be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee." So that our baptist friends gain nothing by saying that the promise referred to by Peter, in the 39th verse, was the promise of the Holy Ghost by Joel; for, as we have said, it was just an outcome of "I will be a God unto thee and to thy seed;" which included their infantile condition, for they were circumcised when eight days old, and the promise awaits their active enjoyment of it. Moreover, in the very next chapter, after repeating what he had spoken in the previous one, viz., "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out; when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord," he concludes with the general promise in the 25th verse, "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, and in thy seed shall all the *families* (Revised Edition) of the earth be blessed." The promise by Joel cannot, in reason, be supposed to set aside family or household relationship to the covenant. Taking this broad view of the "promise" and the "children," it would not restrict their meaning so as to be inapplicable to "posterity"

in all their stages of progressive ages, from infants to adults—although Peter had referred, in his first address, to the *promise* of the Holy Ghost by Joel—because, that being implied in the general promise to Abraham and his seed, the promise, in this supposed aspect of it, does not render it inapplicable to their "children." To conclude, if Peter, according to our baptist friends, made no reference to "children" *as such*, it logically follows, and puts an end to the whole affair, that therefore he has not disinherited them from their long inherited birthright." His statement, in that case, would be like Mark's statement of the commission—it would refer to believers without excluding children as such; for they must be children before they are believers; and, as "the promise" was unto infants before Peter's time by a positive rite, and not positively taken from them, only the form was changed by Christ when he commanded baptism, which supplanted circumcision, which was the children's ordinance. Therefore baptists alone stand responsible for the expulsion of the children, which neither Christ nor the apostles did.

The late Rev. Francis Johnston, baptist minister, Edinburgh, in his pamphlet entitled "Baptism is Dipping," says, on page 86, "When the children of

believing parents have the faith of their parents, then, and only then, are they the seed of Abraham; then, and only then, is Jehovah their God, and, therefore, a God to them."

Now, these statements are very misleading, for they exclude children altogether from any connection of a religious nature with either God or their parents; by it they are no more taken account of than the beasts that perish. According to F. J.'s statements, Jehovah is in *no sense* their God, and in no sense a God to them. But the very fact of their being made the subjects of a religious rite, by which their parents were, by the covenant of grace, as renewed with Abraham, put under obligations to dedicate them to God as their Heavenly Father, and to enter them by the initiatory rite into disciplehood for their spiritual training, as soon as their little minds were capable of receiving religious impressions. These facts prove that God is, in some sense, their God; and in some sense He is a God unto them.

It is very true that infants are not the seed or children of Abraham by *faith;* it is also true that they are not heirs, by *faith*, of "*the promise;*" it is true that God is not their God *by faith*, and that He is not a God to them in forgiving their transgressions, for

they have none; and He is not their God in justifying them through faith. But it does not follow that God is not their God in some sense, or that He is not a God to them in a sense applicable to their condition—even the sense of having given them a moral nature in His own likeness, and in caring for them in His Providence, and laying responsibilities on their parents to care for them and train them up for God. Therefore, although He, as their Heavenly Father, does not speak *to them* in the initiatory religious rite, yet He acts as a God to them by speaking to their parents in *their behalf*—He is thus a God to them.

I trust I have thus made a sufficient exposure of the baptist's erroneous statements. But such statements they find to be necessary for the depreciation of circumcision as a religious ordinance, in order that there may be no ground or principle for the baptism of infants. Thus, it turns out, that one error requires another error to support it.

Admit circumcision in its religious aspect and object as an ordinance for children, because they belong to God, their Heavenly Father, and to the Messiah whom Abraham "saw afar off," and infant baptism naturally follows; their being not only no abrogation of the ritual acknowledgment of infants or

households, or the responsibilities of parents to their households, but also the command of Christ—"disciple all the nations, baptizing them," &c.

An objection sometimes made by our baptist friends is very apt to be made after the preceding arguments, viz.:—We do not need infant baptism; children would be trained up as well without it as with it.

Q.—Would they?

A.—God has given us demonstration in the Abrahamic covenant, and its ritual sign and token that he was of opposite mind.

Whom shall we believe—God or man?

We come now to another proof passage for infant baptism, namely, 1st Cor. vii. 14—"For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean, but now are they holy."

"If these words do not point out and establish the status of children in connection with their parents under the New Covenant, as being precisely the same as that enjoyed by them under the Old or Abrahamic Covenant, then the text becomes inexplicable.

"The objection is here offered that 'holy' and 'unclean' here signify 'legitimate' and 'illegitimate.' But to such objections there are two fatal objections, viz.:—

"1st, The case does not involve the question of legitimacy or illegitimacy at all; heathen children born in wedlock being as legitimate as those born of Christian parents.

"2nd, The word 'holy' in no way signifies legitimate. It occurs in sacred Greek writings between seven hundred and eight hundred times, but never once in that sense. The obvious meaning of the text is this, and vain are all attempts to escape from it—'Let not the believing husband put away the unbelieving wife, let not the believing wife leave the unbelieving husband,' for in either case the believing element extends its sanctity to the household; were it otherwise, your children, who now share that consecrated standing, would be left outside the Christian pale. The Jews applied the term 'unclean' to those outside their consecrated community, and 'holy' to those within it—*holy* being often used in Scripture in this federal sense.

"The words are here transferred—as such words often are—to the Christian Church.

"But in that Jewish Church children had a recognised standing along with their parents; and the very thing Paul tells us here is, that the children of Christian parents, even if but one parent was

Christian, were to have the like standing in the Christian Church.

"*That* status in the Jewish Church was expressed by infant circumcision; and the fair inference is, that the same thing was signified in the Corinthian Church, and in all the apostolic churches, by infant baptism."*

Q.—Can any light be thrown on the fact that so few families have been recorded as having been baptized?

A.—Professor Hodge, of America, in his "Outlines of Theology," pages 503, 504, answers this question as follows:—"The apostles were not settled pastors in the midst of an established Christian community, but itinerant missionaries to an unbelieving world, sent not to baptize but to preach the Gospel (1 Cor. i. 17). Hence we have, in the Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistles, the record of only ten separate instances of baptism. In two of these, viz., of the eunuch and of Paul himself (Acts viii. 38, and ix. 18), there were no families connected with the cases. In the case of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost, the people of Samaria, and the disciples of John at Ephesus, crowds were baptized on the very spot on which they professed to believe. Of the remaining

* Dr. J. Guthrie.

five instances, in the four cases in which the family is mentioned at all, it is expressly said they were baptized, viz., the households of Lydia of Thyatira, of the Jailer of Philippi, of Crispus, and of Stephanas (Acts xvi. 15, 32, 33, and xviii. 8; 1 Cor. i. 16). In the remaining instance of Cornelius, the record implies that the family was also baptized. Thus the apostles, in every case, without a single recorded exception, baptized believers on the spot, and whenever they had families they also baptized their households as such."

From the manner in which the baptizing of these families is mentioned, it appears very evident that the baptism of families or households with the heads or parents thereof was the standing order and practice of the apostles. No one has a right to assume that they acted differently in any of the unrecorded cases, but all are bound to conclude that, in the unrecorded cases as in the recorded, the same uniform practice would be adhered to. As this cannot be Scripturally contradicted, it necessarily follows that, in many of the households which were baptized but not recorded, there would be children, and the only reasonable conclusion is that many children would be baptized during the apostolic age, and this conclusion would stand good although there had not been a child in any of

the households which have been recorded. But the baptist position would be gone, would be untenable, if even one child had belonged to only one of the households. No wonder, then, that they employ all their argumentative powers in endeavouring to prove the absence of children from all the recorded cases.

"Nor is it of any strength what some contend for—'that it cannot be proved there were *infants* in those families,' for the inquiry is not so proper whether there were *infants* in those families, as it concluded, truly and deservedly, that if there *were* they had all been to be baptized."—Dr. Lightfoot.

The question in dispute may be put in this form—Have we scriptural authority for the baptism of our households?

A.—The above cases of household baptism, we submit, are a direct answer to this question—an answer furnished by Scripture example, expressed not in ambiguous words, but in *facts.*

The usual household baptisms by the apostles indicate that no change had taken place on the former practice of initiation, excepting its enlargement of taking in the females.

"I have," said Dr. Wardlaw, "only one other particular to add on this point: it is the remarkable fact

of the entire absence, so far as my recollection serves me, of anything resembling the baptism of households or families in the accounts of the propagation of the Gospel by our baptist brethren. That the apostles baptized families no believer of the Scripture history can doubt, and we have seen that the manner in which such baptisms are recorded, or referred to, indicates that it was no extraordinary thing.

"Now it surely is an extraordinary thing that, in the journals and periodical accounts of baptist Missions in heathen countries, we should never meet with anything of the kind. I question whether, in the thirty years of the history of the baptist mission in India, there is to be found a single instance of the baptism of a household. When do we find a baptist missionary saying, 'When she was baptized and her family;' or, 'I baptized the family of Krishnoo?' We have the baptism of individuals, but nothing corresponding to the apostolic baptism of families. This is a strong corroborative proof that there is some difference between their practice and that of the apostles."

Household baptism must therefore have been understood by the apostles to be included in Christ's command to baptize all the nations.

All these arguments converge to one point, viz,, the

unmistakeable logical conclusion that believing parents have a right, a divinely given right and claim, to their children's initiatory religious connection, along with themselves, to the kingdom of Christ. What higher or more explicit proof need we than the beautiful and touching words of our Saviour, which comes next as collateral evidence in our favour, in Mark x. 14—"Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God."

This passage is not to be explained away from meaning the little children themselves as belonging to Christ's kingdom by quoting Matt. xviii. 1-4, "At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? and Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

Thus Jesus directed the attention of those around Him to the character of a true disciple; He represented a disciple, a member of His kingdom, as like a little child, or as being a child in disposition. The lesson

taught is not about the "child," but those who should be like the child.

But there is an additional lesson taught in Mark x. 14, Matt. xix., and Luke xviii. 15-16,—"And they brought unto him also infants, that he should touch them; but when his disciples saw it they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God." Here the reason is given why the "little children" should not be forbidden to come unto Him, viz., for to such the kingdom belongs; it relates to the children themselves, and to other children like them. That is the reason which Jesus gave why they should not be forbidden to come unto Him.

To say that it does not mean the children to whom the kingdom belongs, but to adults who have their disposition, would be no reason at all why the children should not be forbidden: this cannot be contradicted in truth. When Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of *such* is the kingdom of God," He certainly did not turn away the attention of His disciples from the children by the word "*such*," for the circumstances of the case required the word "*such*" to mean these

children and such other children like them, otherwise He would have given no reason why infants should be brought to Him, nor for our Lord being displeased with the disciples for seeking to hinder their approach. This meaning has sense in it; the other meaning nonsense.

When Jesus had finished His statement about the children He turned to his hearers and thus addressed them: "Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

Children therefore are declared by Jesus to belong to the kingdom of God, which included the other side of the truth, viz., that the kingdom belongs to them. Just as the same is said in Matt. v.—"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for *theirs* is the kingdom of heaven; the kingdom of heaven belongs to them; they have a right to it. Why then should it seem strange to any one that they who belong to the kingdom should have the *mark* or *token* of the kingdom administered to them?

And as the kingdom is founded in grace, and the gracious covenant still continues that was renewed with "Abraham and his seed to all generations," and as believers are still his children, and infants having

been expressly included in the covenant of grace, this relationship is confirmed by Jesus saying "Of *such* is the kingdom of God;" and the token and sign of it having been supplemented by baptism, according to the command of Jesus, "Go ye, therefore, and disciple all the nations, baptizing them," &c. [Revised Ed.]; infants are therefore to be baptized is the only logical deduction from the Old and New Testament Scriptures. And the only authority against it are the Baptis churches for the last 361 years;* and the authority being *new* and not found in the Scriptures, must be unscriptural.

All children belong to Jesus as the second Adam, and under whose reign they are ushered into being: see Colossians i. 16—"All things were created by him and *for* him, and by him all things consist." Death came by the first Adam, and the world would not have been peopled except through Christ, the "quickening Spirit."

"If it were clearly understood that children are legally heirs of Christ, so far set free from the condemnation that fell upon the first Adam, through having been taken hold of by Christ the second Adam,

* Excepting the one in France in 1120, which came to naught. They held that as infants could not be saved they should not be baptized.

much might be said of the congruity of recognising them by baptism, in token of the relationship actually sustained by them through grace."

This view of itself should go far to prevent that hesitancy which exists in the minds of some with respect to the baptism of their children. It is not that children are Christ's because they are baptized; but it is because they are Christ's that they are baptized. They belong to God also as their Father;* therefore the question now is, Have our opponents any warrant from the baptism of the first believers when the Christian church was just being newly formed, and that amongst the Jews themselves, who had all been circumcised in infancy—has our baptist friends any warrant from these circumstances to conclude against infant baptism, and especially from the fact of household baptism, which was practised as soon as circumstances permitted it?

A.—No. The conclusions arrived at by baptists are mere inferences drawn by them from the statement of facts that believers were baptized according to the command of Christ and his apostles, but any intelligent schoolboy might see at a glance that the premises do

* They are baptized "into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

not warrant their conclusion. The fact that believers were commanded to be baptised is no proof that their children were refused baptism or were not baptized afterwards. Moreover, the inference drawn by them is not even warrantable as a mere inference; it is not drawn from the argument; it is a parasite foisted upon it from a biassed judgment.

"Every instance of adult baptism recorded in the Bible is an instance, not of the baptism of one brought up from childhood in the profession of Christianity, but of one who had never before professed Christianity.

"Our baptist brethren present us, in support of their system, with instances of the baptism of *adults*. They would do something more to their purpose if they could produce one or two examples of the baptism of *such adults* as those mentioned. These would be in point. But nothing of the kind is to be found; nothing in the form either of fact, or allusion, or advice, or precept, ... yet every baptist who, in the Christian tuition of his family, opens his Bible and points out to his little interesting charge, the words—"Children obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right," and tenderly inculcates the duty by the motives that are involved in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord," tacitly admits by his prac-

tice that young children *were addressed by the apostles*, and that not merely as members of families, but, since the Epistles were directed *to churches*, as in some way *connected*, by virtue of their relation to their parents, with the little Christian communities to which the apostles wrote. And this is in perfect harmony with the baptism of families, and with all the preceding particulars; and in harmony too with all the directions given as to the treatment of children in the Old Testament Scriptures, when their covenant relation to their parents and their connection with the community of the people of God are not questioned."

There were two leading ordinances in the Jewish Church; one was for infants, principally, and the other for adults. But our baptist friends have deprived the children altogether from any ordinance in the Christian dispensation, as if God had changed His mind after 2000 years, having at the commencement of that period instituted a rite that the children should be recognised not only as religiously related to their parents and the religious community, but also to God himself as their Father in heaven, who so careth for them as to have instituted an ordinance to secure their moral and spiritual and eternal wellbeing, the rite being a token and sign of the spiritual relation-

ship, and that the great general promise, including every needed blessing, would be fulfilled. All this, which we pedobaptists see, has resulted in infant baptism as its natural and logical outcome.

Our baptist friends see no such connection, but speak and act as if it never had been. They ignore the children so far as to treat them as altogether unfit either to hold a place in the Christian dispensation, or of so little consequence that their claim to any connection therewith is unworthy of any formal or public recognition.

Q.—Seeing, then, that the baptists have no ground for their objections, either in Scripture or Ecclesiastical history, and their objections rest merely on *inference*, can they therefore consistently refuse *inferential* evidence in favour of infant baptism *because* it is inferential?

A.—No; they must admit the weight of inferential argument or give up their own position.

Q.—The question now is, can the child, the parent, and an initiatory rite be Scripturally separated, after all the foregoing accumulative, varied, Scriptural, and historical evidence of their unity?

A.—The only true and Scriptural answer is, no. Neither Christ nor the apostles have put them

asunder. The fact of those to whom the gospel was first preached becoming proselytes, and receiving the initiatory rite for themselves and their children or households, is just the *continuation* of what belonged to proselytes and their *households* all along; and the necessary and logical conclusion is, that the nature of the rite of initiation being different does not change the subjects of ritual connection—and these were proselytes and their households with them. As well talk of separating the religious connection or relation between parent and child, as to advocate the separation of them and the rite—which is the sign of that relation—and the covenant blessing connected with it, viz.:—"I will be a God unto thee and thy seed," and, "The promise is to you and your children."

Q.—But does the baptist not say that nothing can bring the child and an initiatory rite together but an express command?

A.—Yes; and we have the express command in the rite of circumcision, which brought the child, the rite, and the parent together; and circumcision having been supplanted by Christ's command to baptize cannot surely be made to mean that He separated the child from its parent. The change

was a new rite, hence the early introduction of household baptism. There was no abrogation of infantile recognition. The Abrahamic covenant did not "wax old and vanish away" like that which was purely and exclusively Mosaic. Therefore we rest upon its "*promise*," and the command of Jesus to "disciple all the nations, baptizing them," with all its surrounding circumstances, relationships, responsibilities, promises, precepts, and warnings to believing parents in behalf of their children.

JESUS BAPTIZED.

We come now to review a favourite argument of some of our baptist friends. They say "Jesus was baptized when grown up, and as a personally responsible subject of the ordinance; therefore we ought to follow His example by deciding that all persons allowed to participate in the rite should be personally capable and responsible subjects."

How plausible is this argument; how readily it is fitted to catch ignorant or shallow individuals; and yet on examination we shall find it utterly irrelevant, and as weak as it is plausible.

1st. Notice that the baptism involved was John's baptism—Matt. xxi. 25; not the ordinance of Christian

baptism, but the baptism of repentance and purification for the community of the Jews as a preparation for "the kingdom of heaven, which was at hand." In the ordinance of baptism, as instituted by Christ, those baptized are baptized "into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." John's baptism had no such signification, therefore it was not Christian baptism. Jesus being a Jew, submitted to the rites and ceremonies peculiar to the Jews; therefore he subjected himself to the baptism of John, which was Jewish. Jesus was circumcised in infancy, and He observed the feast of the passover. Now it follows that if the argument of our baptist friends is valid, then we are bound still to adhere to circumcision and the feast of the passover as well as to John's baptism. But the baptists do not adhere to the former, therefore they have no right to insist that we should adhere to the latter.

Notice secondly, that the example of our Saviour in submitting to the baptism of John was not an example intended for us unto whom the kingdom of God has come, but for those called upon to prepare themselves for its advent.

Notice thirdly, that Jesus was inaugurated into His office at His baptism; till then He remained, so to

speak, in the obscurity of private life. On assuming His public office, Jesus represented the High Priest —High Priest over the house of God. Now as the High Priest was initiated into his office by *washing* and *anointing*, so it also became our Great High Priest, Jesus, to be inaugurated.

We subjoin here some most pointed and pertinent remarks on the baptism of Christ as made by Benson. Speaking of His baptism, Benson says—"We may consider this as a plain argument that baptism may be rightfully administered to, and received by, those that are incapable of many of the chief ends of it, provided they be capable of some other end for which it was also designed; for Christ, being 'without sin,' could neither *repent* nor *promise amendment of life;* being 'the wisdom of the Father,' He could not profess He would *believe on Him that would come after Him*—that is, on Himself; therefore, though infants can neither be taught nor believe, nor give the answer of a good conscience at baptism, yet they may be baptized. 1st. That by this ceremony they may be obliged to observe the laws of that Jesus into whose name they are baptized, even as, under the Mosaic dispensation, the infant, by virtue of circumcision, 'became a debtor to observe the whole law of Moses'

—Acts xv. 5, and Gal. v. 3. 2nd. That by the rite they may be entered into covenant with God, of which they are declared capable by Moses—Deut. xxix. 11."

In conclusion, the whole strength of the baptist's position depends on the assumption that infants never before Christ's time had any religious rite connecting them to the responsibility of their parents and the religious community. They set aside circumcision as a religious ordinance altogether, and speak and act as if it never had been for the moral and spiritual training of the young. Surely that is a fault on their part. Apart from circumcision there would be no sufficient proof for infant baptism, but with it in God's arrangement, baptists have no legitimate right to speak, act, and form churches as if it had not existed.

And now, asking and depending on the blessing of God on the work we have finished, and in the hope that those of our readers who have had doubts on the subject may be aided by it to a settled conviction of the truth, is the prayer of the author.

FINIS.



